

**Pashinyan: “I should be blamed not for handing over the lands, but for not doing it”**



**“It wasn’t up to us to decide whether or not the war would have taken place. We haven’t decided anything. And today standing here, I state that no, Armenia is a sovereign state. And we should return the right to decide to us because we are a country. We are not a stable, we are a country. We are a citizen; we are not a sacrificial lamb that different places decide how and how much to slaughter us and how much to forgive us. We are a state, we are a nation. We are sovereign”, he said, adding: “And we will not allow to decide to take our right from us, by manipulating and imposing models of patriotism on us”, the PM said.**

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan presented on April

13 at the parliament the course of implementation of the 2021 Government program and the annual report.

We present the extracts of the report relating to the Artsakh issue.

**The guilt and responsibility**

To date, the number of the victims of the 44-day Artsakh war is counted to 3,825. The bodies of most of them were found and identified through DNA examination and buried in 2021. From the very beginning I admitted my guilt and responsibility both for war and defeat. But I do not admit the accusations the opponents address to me after November 9, 2020 – of handing over the lands and betrayal.

I should be blamed not for handing over the lands, but for not doing it. I am guilty as in 2018-2019 I did not tell the people that all our close and not close friends expected from us to hand over the 7 regions – in this or that configuration – to

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## PM Pashinyan receives the French Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group Brice Roquefeuil

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received French Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group Brice Roquefeuil.

The Prime Minister emphasized the role of France as a Co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, welcomed Mr. Roquefeuil's visit, which will give an opportunity to discuss the situation and the processes taking place in Artsakh.

The interlocutors stressed the role of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs' format in the comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The sides touched upon humanitarian issues, as well as the possibility of holding negotiations on a peace treaty with Azerbaijan. In this regard, the role of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and the mediating



role of the Co-Chair countries was underlined.

## PM Pashinyan hosts academician Yuri Hovhannisyan and Director of the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research Grigory Trubnikov

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan hosted renowned physicist, Scientific Director of the Laboratory of Nuclear Reaction of the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR), Academician Yuri Hovhannisyan, and Director of JINR, Academician Grigory Trubnikov.

The Prime Minister welcomed their visit to Armenia, noting that the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, of which the Science Committee of Armenia is a member, is a good platform for developing international cooperation, including with the partners of the Russian Federation. Nikol Pashinyan stressed that the Armenian Government is ready to support the further development of bilateral cooperation and the implementation of joint programs in the field of science.

Addressing Yuri Hovhannisyan, the

Prime Minister noted. **“I am glad that you maintain persistent contact with Armenia and the local partners, you have new ideas, you successfully continue your scientific activity”**. The Prime Minister wished the prominent scientist good health.

Yuri Hovhannisyan and Grigory Trubnikov presented the details of the visit to Armenia and the steps aimed at the implementation of new programs in the field of science, in particular, establishment of new scientific centers at the YSU and other higher educational institutions in Yerevan. Yuri Hovhannisyan expressed confidence that our country has good opportunities in the field of science, adding that he will continue to contribute to the progress of the field with his experience.

Issues related to the involvement of young scientists in new programs within



the framework of the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research were discussed at the meeting.

Prime Minister Pashinyan noted that in the recent period the Armenian Government has increased the funding of science by 82%, and the salary of scientists by 40-160%. The Prime Minister stressed that the development of science is of strategic importance for the Armenian Government, it will continue to be in the center of the Government's attention.

## Mirzoyan, Lavrov discuss prospects for a peace treaty between Yerevan and Baku



Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Russia Ararat Mirzoyan and Sergey Lavrov have discussed the prospects for agreeing a peace treaty between Armenia and Azer-

baijan with the assistance of Moscow.

“The Ministers exchanged views on the implementation of the agreements between the leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia dated November 9, 2020, January 11 and November 26, 2021, with an emphasis on further steps to unblock transport communications in the region and delimit the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. They also touched upon the prospects for agreeing on a peaceful agreement between Yere-

van and Baku with Russian assistance,” the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement following the phone conversation.

The Foreign Ministers also discussed issues on the bilateral and regional agenda. “Particular attention was paid to the preparation of the official visit of Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to Russia on April 19-20, including the signing of a package of bilateral documents,” the Russian Foreign Ministry said.



The commission on delimitation and security will be confirmed by April 30, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said as he presented a report on the implementation of the 2021 Government program.

Speaking about the results of the Brussels meeting, Pashinyan said an agreement was reached on the preparations of the peace treaty. He said the timeframe and format will be determined in the process, but stressed that “the signing of a peace agreement with Azerbaijan as soon as pos-

## Armenian PM does not rule out Azerbaijan could bring the peace talks to a deadlock

sible is part of our plans.”

“I must say that we do not have illusions here either, because we do not rule out that Azerbaijan will try to bring the peace talks to a deadlock as soon as possible, making it an occasion for new aggression and aggressive actions against Armenia and Artsakh. We have the same considerations in relation to delimitation works, because we do not rule out that Azerbaijan will use this process to formulate territorial claims against Armenia, de jure declaring that it has no territorial claims,” PM Pashinyan stated.

“Having calculated all the risks and challenges, we have reached the conclusion that standing at the same point and not making some progress in the process not

only does not reduce, but also aggravates the risks. That is why we also agreed on delimitation in Brussels and decided to set up an Armenia-Azerbaijan bilateral commission on delimitation and border security by the end of April and start working,” he added.

“What is our strategy in this regard? To clarify the official positions of Azerbaijan on the issue of the border, to present the position of Armenia on the same issue, to be maximally legitimate in our positions, that is, to use only de jure facts and arguments in the border adjustment, to gain recognition of that legitimacy by the international community and reach agreement on Armenia-Azerbaijan borders on that ground,” the Prime Minister said.

## “Any solution that would lead to exodus of Armenians from Artsakh cannot be acceptable for the Republic of Armenia” – MP

Any solution to the Artsakh issue that would result in the exodus of Armenians from Artsakh cannot be acceptable for Armenia, Member of Parliament from the ruling Civil Contract bloc Eduard Aghajanyan told reporters.

Speaking about the April 14 statement by the Parliament of Artsakh that harshly criticized the Government of Armenia and demanded Yerevan to “renounce their current catastrophic position”, Aghajanyan said that there are no secret processes taking place behind the back of the Armenians of Artsakh. “There is no process behind the back of the Armenians of Artsakh, and can’t be. And naturally the most important beneficiary of this process is the people of Artsakh itself,” Aghajanyan said.

Regarding the Artsakh parliament’s statement, Aghajanyan said that perhaps their colleagues in Artsakh misunderstood the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s speech.

“The Artsakh conflict was never a territorial dispute for Armenia, it has been an issue of exercising the right of the Armenians of Artsakh to live safely in their homeland. Therefore, for us, basically the status has always been a measure to exercise these rights. Armenia’s position on this issue has always been unchanged,” the MP said.

Speaking about the question of lowering the bar in the issue of the NK status – something the Armenian PM said the international community is asking Armenia to do – Aghajanyan said: “This is first of all about the bar as a result of which the kind of consolidation of the international community will be ensured around Armenia that would result in at least a pro-Armenian solution becoming more likely. We have 30 years of negotiating experience during which we’ve had a certain bar, and also because of this during these 30 years Armenia was essentially in a diplomatic isolation, the consequences of which I believe we are all seeing, and we also saw during and after the 44-day war. I think it is time to draw conclusions from our mistakes and move forward realistic reasons.”

Again, speaking about the Artsakh parliamentarians’ statements, Aghajanyan reiterated that PM Pashinyan’s speech did not include anything about Artsakh being or not being part of Azerbaijan.

Speaking about the question regarding a possible status of Artsakh, Aghajanyan said: “I think any solution that would result in the people of Artsakh agreeing to continue living in Artsakh will be acceptable for everyone, first of all for the Artsakhi people themselves. The condition is that if it is acceptable for the people of Artsakh, then I assume that it is acceptable for Ar-



menia and its citizens as well. It is about the kind of conditions that would result in ensuring all rights of the Armenians of Artsakh, conditions where the Artsakh people would not want to leave Artsakh. Otherwise, the solution that would be proposed naturally would not be compatible with the interests of Armenia, neither the people of Artsakh. Any solution that would lead to the exodus of Armenians from Artsakh cannot be acceptable for the Republic of Armenia.”

Aghajanyan noted that it is due to realistic motives and reasons that the Armenian government is attaching importance to being on the same level, same line with the international community in this issue. He said this is an extremely important condition for the issue to be solved maximally favorably.

## US ready to help Armenia and Azerbaijan find peace – Ned Price

The United States continues to encourage further peace negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and stands ready to engage bilaterally and with likeminded partners, including through the role as an OSCE Minsk group co-chair to help the countries find a long-term comprehensive peace, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said at a press briefing.

“We remain committed to promoting a peaceful, democratic, and prosperous future for the South Caucasus region. And we welcome, as you’ve heard from us before in the readouts from Secretary Blinken, the



April 6 meeting between Prime Minister Pashinyan and President Aliyev in Brussels, including the positive momentum on preparations for peace talks and the formation of a bilateral commission on border

delimitation.

As the Secretary emphasized in the calls he had with those two leaders the day before on April 5th, we continue to encourage further peace negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and we reiterated – and the Secretary reiterated – that the United States stands ready to engage bilaterally and with likeminded partners, including through the role as an OSCE Minsk group co-chair to help the countries find a long-term comprehensive peace”, Ned Price said.

## Russia willing to contribute to the conclusion of a peace treaty between Yerevan and Baku – Zakharova



Moscow is willing to promote the conclusion of a peace treaty between Yerevan and Baku, Spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Maria Zakharova said in a statement.

“Basic principles proposed by Baku for establishing interstate relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia and Yerevan’s reaction to them are intended to serve as a basis for the start of Azerbaijani-Armenian negotiations on a peace treaty,” she said.

“Russia is determined to promote the conclusion of a peace treaty between Yerevan and Baku,” the comment underlines.

According to the diplomat, the topic was discussed on April 9 by Russian President Vladimir Putin in telephone conversations with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, as well as by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov at talks in Moscow with his Armenian counterpart Ararat Mirzoyan and telephone conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, Jeyhun Bayramov.

Zakharova said that “from February 24 Washington and Paris curtailed all contacts with Moscow within the co-chairmanship of the OSCE Minsk Group.”

“Meanwhile, the real situation in the South Caucasus does not allow for pauses

in the talks. Further consistent steps are required to restore long-term peace and stability in the region, since the US and France have ceased cooperation as co-chairs,” she stressed.

“In this regard, Ambassador-at-Large Igor Khovaev will continue his work in a new capacity, namely, the special representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on promoting the normalization of relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia. He will focus on the preparation of the aforementioned peace treaty. We count on the support of the efforts of I. A. Khovaev from our allies and partners in Baku and Yerevan. We are open for constructive interaction with other interested players,” the diplomat concluded.

## Armenia sees the settlement of the Artsakh issue within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship – FM

The phone conversation between the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan took place at the initiative of the Azerbaijani side, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said at the Q&A session at the National Assembly.

“We discussed the mechanisms of creation of the bilateral commission on delimitation and border security, as well as the start of negotiations on a possible peace treaty to be signed with Azerbaijan,” Mirzoyan said.

He said Armenia sees the settlement of the Karabakh issue within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship.

“No one has annulled the decision of the conference which saw the establishment of that format, and the decision remains in force,” the Foreign Minister noted.

Unfortunately, he said, the relations between the co-chairing countries are not conducive to organizing a discussion be-

tween the three, and added that “we cannot allow a vacuum to be created in that regard.”



## Armenia offers Turkey to open border for diplomatic passport holders as first step, but Ankara is delaying – MFA

The third meeting between the special representatives of Armenia and Turkey could take place in Vienna, Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Vahan Hunanyan said in comments to Armenpress.

“There is a preliminary understanding between the sides that the next meeting could take place in Vienna. The public will be properly informed as soon as the timeframes and venue of the meeting get final confirmation,” the Spokesperson said.

Commenting on Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu’s remarks that the meeting had better take place either in Armenia or Turkey, Hunanyan said: “During the previous attempts of normalization meetings took place in Armenia and Turkey on the levels of both negotiators and even presidents, but, as you know, they didn’t lead to results. I mean, what matters

is the political will to reach normalization and readiness to take clear, substantive steps. We are displaying both and we expect the same from Turkey. If there is the will, the location of the meetings will become simply a technical matter.”

Moreover, he said, the proposal to hold the meetings of the special representatives in Armenia and Turkey shows that in Turkey’s understanding of the process that it is of entirely bilateral nature. “In this case, it would have been reasonable not to hear weekly statements from Turkey’s representatives that they are advancing the process in coordination with Azerbaijan,” the Spokesman added.

Speaking about the normalization of the Armenia-Turkey relations Minister Cavusoglu mentioned the need for “courageous” steps.

“The Armenian side fully concurs with

the need for making courageous steps. We have numerously showed readiness to move forward, including with the participation of our Foreign Minister in the Antalya Diplomacy Forum and the lifting of the economic embargo. The restoration of flights between Armenia and Turkey was also an important bilateral step,” Vahan Hunanyan said in response.

“We are convinced that the only path for moving forward implies continuous, clear steps. For example, we offered the Turkish side, for the first phase, to open the land border for persons holding diplomatic passports, however the Turkish side is delaying. We believe that this would be a small but substantive, most importantly logical step. We are hopeful that it will be possible to achieve results in this issue,” the Spokesman concluded.

## The statehood of Artsakh, the right to live freely and independently in the historical homeland are absolute values – Artsakh Parliament



The statehood of Artsakh, the right to live freely and independently in the historical homeland are absolute values, the National Assembly of Artsakh said in a statement adopted upon as a result of an extraordinary sitting on April 14.

“The current legal and political status of the Republic of Artsakh has been formed by the will of the people as a result of three referendums and the adoption of a constitution based on their results and through a nationwide agreement established in the

previous years,” the Parliament said in a statement.

“The Armenians of Artsakh are well aware of the price of peace. The statehood of Artsakh, the right to live freely and independently in the historical homeland are absolute values from which even the threat of war cannot keep us,” the statement reads.

The MPs demand that the authorities of the Republic of Armenia renounce their current position and be guided exclusively by these values. “No government has the right to lower the bar of internationally recognized self-determination to a status unacceptable to Artsakh, under the pretext of peace,” the National Assembly said.

On behalf of the Armenians of Artsakh the MPs apply to:

• **Armenians all over the world** to stand

united and resolutely by the brothers and sisters of Armenia and Artsakh in this just struggle,

- **the colleagues in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia** to not deviate from the decision of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia of July 8, 1992,
- **the leadership of the Russian Federation.** During the peacekeeping mission, it is very important for us that you do not allow anyone to manipulate the problems that arise, as a basis for questioning the further security of the people of Artsakh,
- **the leaders of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries.** Make efforts to maintain the only international mandate for the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict regardless of all other disagreements.

## Visit of Armenian lawmakers was not previously agreed with Russian peacekeepers – Zakharova

Spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Maria Zakharova says the Armenian MPs were not allowed to Nagorno Karabakh as the visit had not been previously agreed with the peacekeepers.

Statements on actions of peacekeepers allegedly contradicting the provisions of the trilateral Statement of November 9 between the leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan “are false.”

Commenting on the recent problems with the access of Armenian lawmakers

to the zone of responsibility of the Russian peacekeepers, Zakharova indicated that “the Russian peacekeeping contingent is acting in strict accordance with the provisions of the statement of the leaders of Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia dated November 9, 2020. This visit was not previously agreed with the command of the Russian peacekeeping contingent.”

“We expect that, taking into account the incidents that have taken place both in the zone of responsibility of the Russian

peacekeeping contingent and in certain sections of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, both sides will refrain from steps that could further aggravate the situation in the region,” she stressed.

On April 12 MPs from the opposition factions boycotted the National Assembly session and left the session hall, announcing the intention to visit Artsakh, but were not allowed to enter.

## Armenian Prime Minister receives the Executive Director of Corporación América Airports



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received Martin Eurnekian, Executive Director of Corporación América Airports, accompanied by Marcelo Wende, General Director of Armenia International Airports, and Deputy Director Sergey Avetisyan.

The Prime Minister attached importance to the company's activities in Ar-

menia, noting that the Government is interested in deepening mutually beneficial partnership.

Martin Eurnekian expressed satisfaction with the cooperation with the Armenian government and conveyed to the warm greetings of Argentine-Armenian businessman, philanthropist Eduardo Eurnekian.

The interlocutors discussed the progress of the programs implemented by "Corporation America" in Armenia and the prospects of expansion. In particular, they touched upon issues related to the develop-

ment of Yerevan's Zvartnots and Gyumri's Shirak airports given to the company for concession management, and the improvement of infrastructure.

In this context, reference was made to the possibilities of implementing new investment projects, which will contribute to the development of the aviation market, increase the flow of passengers, and provide quality services. They exchanged views on possible new programs in other directions as well.

The parties agreed to continue discussions on further steps.

## Importing electric vehicles to Armenia is 32% cheaper than ICE cars

The government of Armenia defined a tariff privilege for electric vehicles being imported to Armenia.

Minister of Economy Vahan Kerobyan said at the Cabinet meeting that back in March, 2022 the Eurasian Economic Commission Council adopted a decision that granted every member state a certain amount of quotas for imports of e-cars as part of customs-tariff privileges.

"Within this framework imported electric cars are exempt from customs duties. Armenia has taken 7000 quotas given that the number of electric vehicles being imported is significantly rising," Kerobyan said, adding that the privilege will cover 6400 cars because they want to keep a certain reserve for brand new cars, the import



of which takes longer.

The decision takes effect against e-cars imported since January 1, 2022, and persons who've imported since then are entitled to apply to the government and receive their payments back. The decision is in effect for companies as well, but since March 31.

Armenia has a quota of 8000 e-cars for

next year, he added.

PM Pashinyan underscored that thus the first 6400 electric vehicles to be imported to Armenia will be exempt from customs duties.

"Let me remind that back in 2019-2020 the imports of electric cars was exempt from value added tax. This means that electric cars can be imported to Armenia 32% cheaper than ordinary cars with internal combustion engines. Therefore, I think this is truly a very good opportunity for electric cars to be imported to Armenia. I'd like to emphasize that naturally this is also a good occasion to make investments in electric re-charging and maintenance sectors, which is very important," the PM said.

## Fly Arna celebrates graduation of first cabin crew cadet

(Press Release, ANIF) Armenian National Interests Fund (ANIF) is glad to inform that Fly Arna, Armenia's national airline, a joint venture company between ANIF and Air Arabia Group, today announced the graduation of its first batch as cabin crew in their brand-new uniform, who successfully completed their technical and customer service training.

This graduation follows the wide recruitment campaign that took place last January in Armenia to support the launch

of the airline operations. The graduated cadet consisted of 20 cabin crew members who graduated after completing their extensive initial and practical course and training.

As batch 01 is ready to embark, two more cabin crew batches are currently under training. This follows the readiness of the Fly Arna's first aircraft that completed its paint job earlier this week.

Fly Arna is currently in the process of applying for its Airline Operation Certifi-



cate (AOC) and more details on the launch date and destinations will be shared in due course.

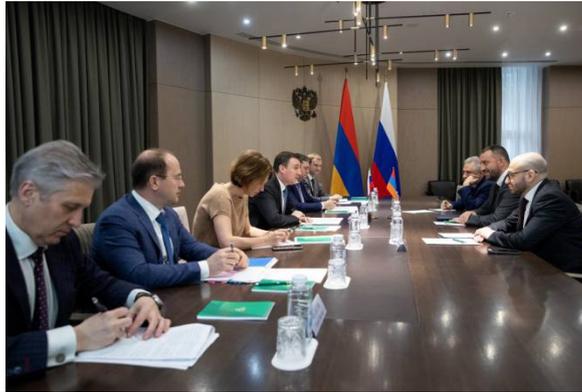
## Trade turnover of agri-food products increased by 19.8%. Kerobyan meets with the Russian Minister of Agriculture

Within the framework of his working visit to Russia, the Minister of Economy of the Republic of Armenia Vahan Kerobyan met with the Minister of Agriculture of the Russian Federation Dmitry Patrushev on April 12.

As ARMENPRESS was informed from the Ministry of Economy of Armenia, during the meeting, the prospects for further development of bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture were discussed.

“As an example of the result of joint work, the growth of trade turnover of agri-food products was mentioned, which is implemented both within the framework of bilateral relations and the Eurasian Economic Union,” the statement reads.

The trade turnover of agri-food products between the Republic of Armenia and



the Russian Federation in 2020 amounted to 753.8 million USD, and in 2021 - 903.1 million USD, an increase of about 19.8% over the previous year.

Exports from the Republic of Armenia to the Russian Federation in 2020 amounted to 428.4 million USD, and in 2021 - 534.3 million USD, which is about 24.7% more than last year.

Prospects for the development of relations in the field of agro-industry were discussed at the meeting. Both sides stressed that cooperation in the agro-industrial sphere has a significant potential for development.

The interlocutors referred to the organization of business visits of the agro-producers.

Vahan Kerobyan and Dmitry Patrushev agreed that the organization of a direct dialogue in the field of agro-industrial complex is of special importance at present, as it contributes to the maintenance of food security of the two countries.

At the end of the meeting, they stressed the great opportunities for further development of cooperation, noting that the meeting will be an additional impetus for the development of bilateral relations.

## World-famous scientist Yuri Hovhannisyán hosted at the Central Bank of Armenia



On April 14, 2022, the Central Bank of the Republic of Armenia issued a silver commemorative coin dedicated to the

chemical element “Oganesson (Og).”

The date of issue of the commemorative coin was chosen to coincide with Yuri Hovhannisyán’s (Oganessian) birthday, who had the the artificial radioactive element “Oganesson (Og)” of Mendeleev’s periodic table named after him.

On this occasion, the scholar was hosted at the Central Bank.

The participants of the meeting congratulated the world-famous scientist on

his birthday, shared words of gratitude, and wished him new achievements in the professional field.

Yuri Hovhannisyán is the Scientific Director of the Nuclear Reaction Laboratory of Dubna (Russia) after G. N. Fleurov. Under his direct supervision, numerous experiments in the study of super-heavy chemical elements were successfully carried out, and eight new atomic elements were discovered.



The Central Bank of Armenia has issued gold and silver collector coins dedicated to the 30th anniversary of formation of Armenian Army.

On January 28, 1992, the Government

## New gold and silver collector coins mark 30th anniversary of Armenian Army

of the Republic of Armenia adopted the historical resolution “On the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia” proclaiming creation of the Armenian National Army.

The Armenian Army has developed by overcoming the hardest trials in the period of formation of independent statehood and has become the most crucial safeguard of



the security of the Armenian people.

page 1 ➔ Azerbaijan and lower the bar we set for the status of Artsakh.

### **I am guilty for not telling the people**

I am guilty for not telling the people that the international community recognizes the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and expects us to do so too. I am guilty for not telling unequivocally that the scenarios not acceptable for us were not acceptable for Azerbaijan and the representatives of the international community sometimes clearly, sometimes in a diplomatic way were telling that if the Armenian side accepted them, they still needed to convince Azerbaijan to do it.

I had to present all this in detail to the people, my real guilt was not doing it. If I handed over the lands, I would have probably saved thousands of lives and not doing it, I in fact became the author of decisions that resulted in thousands of victims.

To speak about it with the people I should have first convince myself that it was the right way, and I should confess that I could not convince myself. Why? The reason is the same as the one why the opposition cannot adapt to the reality and this reason may be formulated in the following way – Sanasar or Kubatli? Zangeilan or Kovsakan?

In terms of content the situation is the same, and I do not want to repeat the same mistakes now.

Today the international community clearly tells us – be the only country in the world not having recognized the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan on the bilateral level which poses a great threat not only to Artsakh but to Armenia as well.

They tell us lower a bit the bar we have set for the status of Nagorno-Karabakh and ensure a big international coalition around Armenia and Artsakh, in the opposite case they ask us not to rely on them as they would not be able to help.

These are the social-psychological motives which make us, me personally, claim



more consistently, despite all the difficulties that there is no alternative to the peace agenda.

### **Preparation work on peace treaty**

I have agreed to the start of preparation work by the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan on the peace treaty. The schedule and the format must be discussed and decided upon but the signing of peace treaty with Azerbaijan as soon as possible, is what we plan.

We do not have any illusions here, because we do not exclude the attempts of Azerbaijan to quickly lead the peace talk process into a deadlock making it an occasion for new aggression against Armenia and Artsakh. We have the same calculations regarding the delimitation work, we do not exclude that Azerbaijan will use this process to formulate territorial claims against Armenia, stating “de jure” that it does not have any territorial claims.

Understanding and calculating all the risks and challenges we have come to the conclusion that standing on the same point and not ensuring any progress in the process not only fails to reduce but even escalates the risks.

This is the reason why we have reached agreement in Brussels to set up a bilateral delimitation and border security commission by the end of April and launch

the work.

This commission will have double mandate – it will work on delimitation and ensure the security and stability along the entire border. Currently we are working on the format and staff of the commission. We need to clarify the staff by April 30.

### **The issue of status of Artsakh**

We have recorded that Armenia has not had territorial claims from Azerbaijan and the Karabakh issue is not the issue of territory but the right. Consequently, we have recorded that the security guarantees of the Armenians of Karabakh, the implementation of their rights and freedoms as well as the clarification of the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh are of principle importance for Armenia. Consequently, with this addition, Armenia is ready to start the talks.

Another very important nuance – if previously we put the status of Nagorno Karabakh as the basis and the security guarantees and rights derived from it, now we put the security guarantees and rights with the status deriving from them.

We register that the status in the current situation is not a purpose but a way to ensure the security and rights of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh.

## Rules for publishing or disseminating information during marshal law established by Artsakh President's decree



President of the Artsakh Republic Arayik Harutyunyan has signed a decree, establishing rules for publishing or disseminating information during the legal regime of martial law declared in the territory of the Artsakh Republic. They are as follows:

1. During the legal regime of martial law declared in the territory of the Artsakh Republic, proceeding from the necessity to ensure state and public security of external and internal nature, any military information, non-military information related to state security, information and publications on the border situation of the Artsakh Republic, publication and transmission of information materials, interviews, reports, other information on military equipment, republic's Armed Forces and other troops, as well as any information directly related to them, (hereinafter all together referred to as reports), including on websites, social networks (hereinafter referred to as publications), should be done exclusively with reference to official information provided or published by state bodies (hereinafter referred to as official information), fully reflecting the official information (without editing).

2. Publication of reports deliberately misleading and (or) controverting the actions (including speeches, reports) of the state and local self-government bodies and

officials, relating to ensuring the legal regime of martial law and state security, is prohibited.

3. Propaganda against the defense capacity and security of the Artsakh Republic is prohibited.

4. Official statements related to the reports are made by the President of the Artsakh Republic, state authorized bodies of the relevant sphere of the Artsakh Republic, and other persons at the instruction of the President of the Artsakh Republic.

5. Reports are published by the Press Secretary of the President of the Artsakh Republic or the Central Information Department of the Office of the President of the Artsakh Republic or the heads or authorized representatives of the state authorized bodies of relevant sphere.

6. Officials, representatives of public administration bodies may, within the scope of their powers, make statements and comments on the reports only in concordance with the positions agreed with the Central Information Department of the Office of the Artsakh Republic President.

7. The observance of the rules provided for in paragraphs 1-3 is exercised by the Artsakh Republic Police. The Police is authorized to take necessary measures to ensure the deletion of published reports and information, to carry out temporary confis-

cation or detention of printing equipment, radio broadcasters, amplifiers, and duplicators.

Violation of the established rules entails both administrative and criminal liability. In particular, the following paragraphs of Article 182.5 of the Code of Administrative Offenses provide:

“5. Violation of the rules of publication or dissemination of information by a media operator during the martial law, non-observance of the special accreditation procedure by a journalist, violation of special rules for the use of means of communication entails imposition of a fine in the amount of seven hundred to one thousand times the minimum wage.

6. Violation of the rules of publication or dissemination of information by persons not engaged in media activities or violation of the rules of restriction of freedom of expression entails imposition of a fine in the amount of three hundred to seven hundred times the minimum wage.

7. After being subjected to the fines provided for in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this Article, failure to immediately eliminate the publication disseminated in violation of the rules of publication or dissemination of information established during martial law entails imposition of a fine in the amount of one thousand to one and a half thousand times the minimum wage, and for those not engaged in media activities, from seven hundred to a thousand times the minimum wage.”

Article 321.4 of the Criminal Code provides:

“1. Violation of the rules of publication or dissemination of information during the legal regime of martial law, which has caused significant damage to the rights or legitimate interests of individuals or organizations or the legitimate interests of society or the state entails imposition of a fine in the amount of two thousand to three thousand times the minimum wage, or imprisonment for a maximum of 2 years.

## Very Reverend Dr. Rene Levonian: The First Academic Year Showed Great Interest of the Audience in Armenians and Armenia



As it was announced last year, the Very Reverend Dr. Rene Levonian was appointed the new Chair of Armenology at the Catholic University of Lyon by the Rector of the University as well as in consultation with the Dean of the Theological Faculty of the University.

In April of this year, the 2021-2022 academic year ended. What was he like?

We talked about this with Dr. Rene Levonian.

Rene Levonian: Was born and educated in France. Received university certificates in the social and educational spheres. He also holds the title of Doctor of Theology.

He served for 20 years as a Pastor in France, then, for seventeen years - in Armenia and Artsakh, and for the third period – as the Chairman of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the countries of Eurasia (Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union).

Currently, he is representative of the Armenian Evangelical World Council and the Armenian Evangelical Association of America in Eurasia.

He is a diplomat by nature. In the 1990s, he served as Head of the Office of the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia in France as well as Adviser at the Administration of the President of Armenia and Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Artsakh Republic.

- The first academic year lasted



from September 2021 to April 2022. During this time, we had 21 permanent students and free listeners, 1/3 of whom are Armenians by origin, and 2/3 are the French.

...I must say with no exaggeration that it was excellent, because the audience had a great interest in Armenia and Armenians, and there were those who had enough information. I will not hide that a large number of students did not have information about the material before the start of the course, but after almost a year of this course, we summed up the results with its participants. Most of the students exchanged their opinions, and it turned out that many are ready to take part also in the next year's courses, moreover, we hope we'll have new students.

...The general history of the Armenians included events starting from the days of the origin of our nation and ending with the 44-day war in Artsakh, in addition, the Cilician Kingdom, the Armenian Genocide, and the Armenian Republics over the past hundred years were discussed in a rather specialized form.

Therefore, the listeners were very impressed by the fact that, despite all the disasters, the Armenians survived until today.

By a separate section the material "Christianity and Armenians", whether in historical or theological terms was given to the students. I am also proud

to note that we have received Professor Claude Mutaftian, who is a well-known mathematician and historian, as well as someone who has delved into the history of Cilicia and the Karabakh issue.

The same applies to Professor Claire Mouradian, who is a historian, and two clerical lectures were held respectively about the Armenian Apostolic Church, -Fr. Andranik Maldjian and Bishop Hovsep Kelekian - about the Armenian Catholic Church. It is clear that I myself taught the history of the Armenian Evangelical Church and its theology himself...

H: - Allow interrupt you for a while, highly esteemed Dr. Levonian: the fact



that the students of your department have such a great interest in us, the Armenians, is not also due, among other reasons, to the centuries-old positive attitude of the French people and the state towards the Armenian nation?

- Yes, absolutely.

— And what will be the main topics of the upcoming academic year?

- The problem is that last academic year we quickly moved on to the issue of the origin of Armenians, but this year we have to delve into the details of this.

Another topic will be "Armenian Art and Architecture".

We also need to talk about two important people - Nerses Shnorhali and Grigor Narekatsi.

Plus, the history and mission of the  page 13

## Anniversary of Armenian Genocide commemorated at Cyprus Parliament

On Thursday, April 14th, 2022, the Armenian Representative, Vartkes Mahdessian, addressed the plenary session of the Parliament of Cyprus, following a moment of silence in memory of victims of the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

Below is the full text of the speech:

Honorable Madame Speaker, dear colleagues,

Just like every year, this year as well we remember the tragic events of the Armenian Genocide, the first great genocide of the turbulent 20th century. At the same time, we honor the memory of more than 1,500,000 innocent Armenian martyrs, who between 1915-1923 were massacred, murdered or deported and were led to forced death marches to the inhospitable Der Zor desert in present-day Syria. Moreover, at least 95,000 Armenians were Islamized, resulting in their existing descendants being unaware of their ancestry.

Along with the physical extermination of the “gâvur” (infidel) Armenians, the Turks also perpetrated a cultural genocide, in order to eradicate the centuries-old Armenian presence in Asia Minor, the Pontus, Western Armenia and Cilicia, where between 1894 and 1923 a total of 450 monasteries, 1,950 schools and 2,430 churches were seized and destroyed or changed use, whereas the names of about 3,600 towns and villages were Turkified.



The 800,000 surviving refugees were scattered across the globe, forming the Armenian Diaspora. Haunted by the terrifying memories of the great disaster, they set up a new life, contributing to the commerce, sports, scouting, sciences, arts and culture of their adopted homelands.

Amongst these new homelands was our little Cyprus, which widely opened its arms and welcomed over 9,000 Armenian refugees, who arrived in Larnaca and all its other harbours, including my family. With effort and toil, the 1,300 who eventually remained managed to find their feet and carry on the good name that Armenians have had on our island for centuries.

Cyprus has always been a constant supporter of the Armenians and of Armenia. In 1975 it became the second country in the world and the first one in Europe to recognize the Armenian Genocide, with Resolution 36 that the House of Representatives passed on this very floor, while in 2015 it criminalized its denial. The practical and moral support it offers us is constant and continuous, whereas on a state level the

two countries co-operate excellently in commercial and geostrategic domains. Once again, I feel the need to thank all the governments of the Republic of Cyprus for the above.

Having suffered from the same enemy, Armenians and Cypriots are fighting for justice, and we are sailing in the same boat with Ukraine and other countries that have great powers against them. Unfortunately, the powerful of the Earth have always settled for condemnation statements, leaving the weak at the mercy of the invader’s desires and eternal victims of their interests.

The global agitation about the recent Russian invasion in Ukraine is striking, while the public opinion remained impassive to the Turkish invasion in Cyprus in 1974, the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, the American invasion in Iraq in 2003 and, more recently, the violations of the buffer zone in Cyprus and the status quo violations in Famagusta by the Turks, the war in Artsakh and the ongoing violation of Armenia’s borders by the Azeris.

The international community must finally stop pretending, acting based on financial and geostrategic interests, and it must assume to role of guardian of international law, putting words into practice, as the poet Homer wrote in the Iliad. Thank you.

## Russian warship Moskva has sunk – Defence Ministry



**A Russian warship that was damaged by an explosion on April 13 has sunk, Russia’s defence ministry has said.**

Moskva, the flagship of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet, was being towed to port when stormy seas caused it to sink, according to a ministry message.

While Kyiv says its missiles hit the

warship, Moscow has not reported any attack. It says the vessel sank after a fire.

The blaze caused the explosion of the 510-crew missile cruiser’s ammunition, Russia says, adding that the entire crew were evacuated to nearby Russian vessels in the Black Sea. It provided no further details.



The Feast of the Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ or the Easter Feast is one of the five major feasts of the Armenian Church.

The Mystery of Easter is the mystery of Jesus Christ, His Salutary Holy Blood shed for mankind and His Rising from the dead for mankind. The Son of God should incarnate, be subjected to tortures, be crucified, buried and the third day raise from death (Ps 15:9-11, 29:4, 40:11-13, 117:16-17, Ho 6:2-3).

Following the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ His body was taken off the cross and placed into the tomb and the entrance to the tomb was closed by a large stone and the soldiers were ordered to control the entrance to the tomb. After three days the three women, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the Mother of James and Joseph, and the wife of Zebedee brought spices and perfumes to anoint the body of Jesus.

They found the stone rolled away from the entrance to the tomb, so they went in but they didn't see the body of the Lord. They stood there puzzled about this, when suddenly two angels dressed in white appeared and said to them, "Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive? He is not here, he has been raised" (Lk 24:5-6). The women returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven disciples and the rest. According to Peter more than

## Armenian Church celebrates the Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ

500 people saw Christ who had risen from the dead. So, this is the evangelical tiding of the fact of Easter or Holy Resurrection.

Resurrection of Christ became the basis of the Christian doctrine and faith. "If that is true, it means that Christ has been raised from death, then we have nothing to preach and you have nothing to believe" (1 Co 15:13-14).

Christ rose from the dead, by means of His Death He destroyed Death and granted eternal life. "I am the Resurrection and I am the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (Jn 11:25).

Christ died for the salvation of mankind and by His Blood took away the sin in the world, so that we should inherit eternal life.

On the day of the Easter feast people dye eggs red as a symbol of fruitful life, salvation and joy. St. Gregory of Tatev considers the egg to be the symbol of the world, the shell of which is the sky, the membrane is the air, the white is the water and the yolk is the earth. Dyeing eggs red symbolizes the salvation of the world by means of Blood of Christ.

The Armenian Church celebrates the Easter Feast on the first Sunday following the full moon of the vernal equinox, with 35 days moveability, during the period from March 21 –April 26.

The Armenian Church traditionally celebrates evening Divine Liturgy on the evening prior to Jesus Christ's Glorious Resurrection (Easter). Following the conclusion of the Liturgy, the assembled faithful take lit candles home, symbolizing the

Light that Christ brought into the world. The Divine Liturgy celebrated on the eve is the start of the festive ceremonies.

On Sunday, the day of the feast, a morning service is conducted the Andastan Service is performed wherein the four corners of the world are blessed, afterwards the Divine Liturgy is celebrated. That day the faithful welcome each other on the occasion of the Glorious Resurrection of Christ conveying the great tiding: "Christ is Risen from the dead" and receive the answer: "Blessed is the Resurrection of Christ."

Fifty-day period beginning from the Easter Feast – the Holy Feast of the Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ – and lasting till Pentecost in the Holy Armenian Apostolic Church is called Hinounk or Hinants period. That period is dedicated to the mystery of Resurrection of the Lord, and that is why it is Dominical period.

The name "Hinounk" comes from the word hisuonk (fifty). The first forty days of the period are dedicated to the appearances of Risen Christ: "For forty days after his death he appeared to them many times in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive. They saw him, and he talked with them about the Kingdom of God" (Ac 1:3).

The last ten days of the Hinants period are dedicated to the Ascension of Christ.

Hinants period is concluded with the Feast of Ascension. According to the Church laws there are no fasting days during all fifty days of Hinants period, which means that all people can eat everything during that period.

*Source: Qahana.am*

## Investigators bust online drug trafficking syndicates

Investigators revealed 6 drug trafficking syndicates that sold narcotics through Telegram and HYDRA accounts.

Hovhannes Hambaryan, the head of the department in charge of narcotics crimes at the Investigative Committee told reporters that the syndicates were running more than 30 accounts on Telegram and 5 accounts on HYDRA.

The total street value of the drugs that were found during raids exceeds

250,000,000 drams, while the syndicate's revenue of sold narcotics exceeds 700,000,000 drams.

"In addition, three apartments were found in Yerevan that were equipped with drug production rooms. Another apartment was found that was used for making Mephedrone drug," Hambaryan, the Head of the Department of Investigation of Crimes on Human Trafficking, against Sexual Immunity of Juveniles and Illegal Turnover of

Drugs said at the press conference.

He warned that in present days narcotic buyers are able to order the drugs without even leaving their home and receive it as a post package. "Today the kind of narcotics are emerging in the black market which didn't exist yesterday. A situation is created when these drugs start circulating in public areas and encompass a wide circle of the society, mostly teenagers, and young adults," he said.



## Armenian community representatives expected to meet with Macron

Representatives of the Armenian community of France are expected to meet with President Emmanuel Macron ahead of the second round of the French presidential election, Co-Chair of the Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations of France, member of the ARF Bureau, Murad Papazian, told *Armenpress*.

He said Macron is expected to present his proposals for the next five years to the Armenian community.

“The communication, work with Emmanuel Macron continues. He always attends the annual dinner of the Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations

of France, the April 24th events. Meetings with him, his team and ministers take place during the year. Even if we have complaints, we present them in public platform, for instance, connected with the 44-day war, the reality that France sold weapons to Azerbaijan. We condemned it and talked about it with President Macron. It’s important to remind that the French presence in the OSCE Minsk Group as a Co-Chair country is important. Even if the war in Ukraine hinders a little or there are issues between the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, we must encourage that France continues its work as a Co-Chair country,” Murad Papazian said.

As for the next French presidential candidate Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Rally party, Murad Papazian

said they haven’t had any relationship with her as they have always rejected any collaboration with the far-rights.

“We cannot imagine a vote for Marine Le Pen. We always reject the far-right. They are offering a dangerous policy. It will be a problem for France to have a far-right president, it will seriously weaken its positions in the international arena. Marine Le Pen is not an alternative for us”, Murad Papazian said.

No candidate secured an absolute majority of votes in the first round of the French presidential election held on April 10. Incumbent President Emmanuel Macron received the 27,8% of the votes, Marine Le Pen – 23,1%. The runoff election is scheduled on April 24.

page 10 ➡ Mekhitarists.

We should also invite Mr. Tigran Yegavian who recently published a book “The Current Geopolitical Situation of Armenia”. Why I wanted it to be: so that people don’t think that our history is only interesting...

In short, these are preliminary topics for the upcoming academic year.

— How would you describe the Armenian community in France today?

— As years ago, in my book on the integration of foreign communities into French society, I noted, and both Armenians and French agreed with this, that Armenians are the most well integrated or exemplary citizens ... This is, of course, good, but, on the other hand, we have strong preservation of our Ar-

menian identity - and this two should, so to speak, to cooperate.

Families who in the early 1980s moved to France from the Middle East and those who came to France from Armenia over the past 30 years, however, gave new strength, new blood to the Armenian community of France. And our community, thanks to various successful programs, managed to present the Armenian Cause in the best possible way to both the French people and the political elite and the authorities of the Country, as a result of which France in 2001 not only recognized the Armenian Genocide, but also adopted it as a law.

I would like to add that the Armenian community should make efforts to make social, cultural and educational work more organized.

Now about our connections with Armenia: the Armenian community of France has never been indifferent to what is happening in Armenia and Artsakh, and has always wanted to strengthen ties with them.



## Only 200 Armenians will be allowed to Holy Sepulcher Church on Easter – Patriarchate

The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem is obliged to make this announcement before the Easter Holiday to inform its faithful the severe restrictions which are imposed this year by the Israeli Police.

The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem has informed its faithful about the severe restrictions imposed this year by the Israeli Police during the Easter Holiday.

“On April 11, 2022, the representatives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem met with the responsible authorities of the Police who informed about the decision that this year only 1000 attendees would be allowed to enter the Holy Sepulcher Church, of which only 200 would be Armenians to participate the Holy Fire ceremony. Patriarchate’s representatives expressed their deep concern and disagreement to this unfair arrangement and the meeting was dispersed after a long discussion,” the Patriarchate said in a statement.

It is a known fact, as the Status Quo



of the Holy Places describes, that the Armenian Apostolic Church has exceptional rights during the Holy Fire ceremony.

To start the day of Holy Fire celebration, the door of the Holy Sepulcher Church is opened by the Armenian Church by right, giving opportunity to hundreds of Armenian and non-Armenian pilgrims to attend and witness the opening ceremony. And with a second procession, the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, joined with hundreds of pilgrims, proceeds to the Holy Sepulcher Church to make a solemn entry. Then an Armenian clergyman joins the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem and the two

enter the Tomb of Christ to bring out the Holy Fire, symbolizing the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The Armenian Church for centuries has practiced these rights without any restrictions or limitations during each Government that ruled the area. Therefore, with this statement the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem expresses its disagreement and protests

against Israeli Police for imposing such restrictions. The Patriarchate demands that the Holy Fire ceremony be celebrated similar to previous years without limiting the number of faithful attendees,” the Patriarchate said.

“The Israeli Government on international level took in charge to secure the freedom of religious activities and performances without restraint. Therefore, the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem hopes and expects that the Israeli Police would respect and follow its undertaking,” the statement reads.

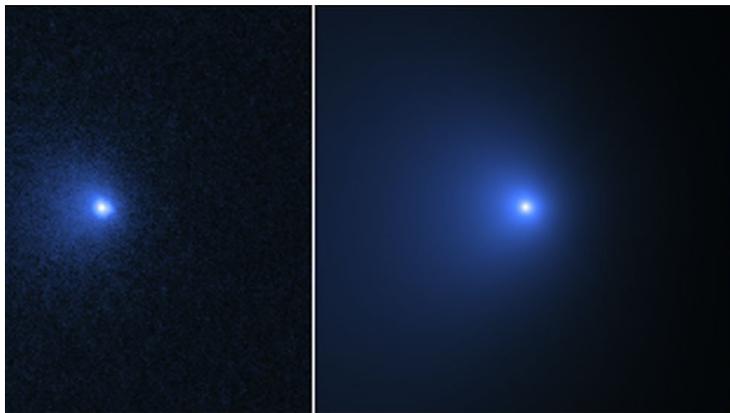
## Nasa scientists spy ‘largest comet ever seen’

A comet with a nucleus 50 times bigger than normal is barrelling towards Earth at 22,000 miles per hour, the *BBC* reports.

Nasa’s Hubble telescope has determined the comet’s icy nucleus has a mass of about 500 trillion tons and is 137km wide – larger than the US state of Rhode Island.

But not to worry. The closest it will get is one billion miles away from the Sun, and that won’t be until 2031.

It was first spotted in 2010 but only now has Hubble confirmed its existence.



And it’s larger than any comet ever seen by astronomers before.

“We’ve always suspected this comet had to be big because it is so bright at such a large distance,” said David Jewitt,

a professor of planetary science and astronomy at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). “Now we confirm it is.”

Nasa, which describes the icy dirtball as a behemoth “barrelling this way”, has named it Bernardinelli-Bernstein after its discovery by astronomers Pedro Bernardinelli and Gary Bernstein.

They first sighted it while working at the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory in Chile over a decade ago when it was three billion miles from the Sun.

# ARMENIA

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## Armenian Identity Card

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

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

The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID)

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

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) worldwide network enables cardholders to elect and get elected to the leadership of The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) network structures.

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can benefit from the possibility of discounts intended for HyeID cardholders when shopping for products and services in various countries of the world.

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can participate in queries and referenda initiated by the HyeID network and vote on issues of national interest to Armenians.

- Ensure the security and privacy of The Armenian Identification Card (HyeID) cardholders.

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

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