

Armenian PM receives EU delegation



Armenia - Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan meets the representative of the French Presidency to the Council of the European Union, Isabelle Dumont, and the EU's special representative to the South Caucasus Toivo Klaar, January 21, 2022.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received a delegation led by Toivo Klaar, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia.

Senior European diplomats have visited Azerbaijan and Armenia to discuss ongoing efforts to de-escalate tensions along the border between the two countries.

Toivo Klaar, the European Union's special representative to the South Caucasus, and French envoy Isabelle Dumont met with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in Baku on January 20 before proceeding to Yerevan for talks with Armenian leaders held on January 21.

Klaar described the meetings as "excellent." "The EU is firmly committed to peaceful and prosperous South Caucasus,"

he tweeted at the end of what he called a "successful" visit.

The meeting focused on the situation in the South Caucasus region after the 44-day war, steps taken to defuse the situation on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and ensure stability.

The interlocutors exchanged views on the results of the meetings between the Russian President in Sochi, as well as the meetings of the President of the European Council in Brussels and the President of France, and the implementation of the agreements reached.

They also stressed the need for the full implementation of the peace process under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group for the settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and the intensification of the Co-Chairs' activities.

Armenia, UAE keen to develop cooperation in science and technology

p. 2

Azerbaijan, France in diplomatic row over Pécresse visit to Artsakh

p. 4

Moody's assigns Ba3 rating to Export Insurance Agency of Armenia; outlook stable

p.7

Negotiations the best way to finding solutions: Armenian President talks to Sky News Arabia

p. 5

Pashinyan, Putin emphasize the expediency of continuing work in OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship format

At the initiative of the Armenian side, Vladimir Putin had a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan, Kremlin's Press Service reports.

The practical aspects of the implementation of the agreements enshrined in the trilateral statements of the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia dated November 9, 2020, January 11 and November 26, 2021, including issues related to the delimitation and demarcation of the Arme-



nian-Azerbaijani border, were discussed.

The expediency of continuing work in

the format of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship (Russia, USA, France) was noted.

Taking into account the current chairmanship of Armenia in the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the prospects for further cooperation within the CSTO were discussed.

At the request of Nikol Pashinyan, the President of Russia briefly informed about the progress of negotiations with the United States and its allies on guarantees of security of the Russian Federation.

Armenia, UAE keen to develop cooperation in science and technology

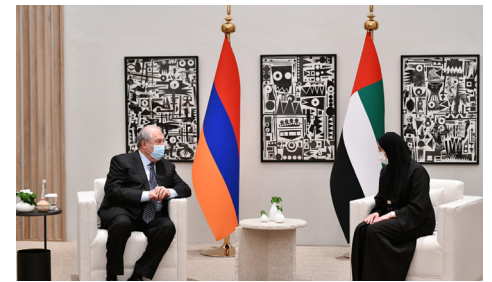
On a working visit to the United Arab Emirates, President Armen Sarkissian met with the Sarah bint Yousef Al Amiri, UAE Minister of State for Advanced Technology. The Minister also chairs the UAE Space Agency's Council of Scientists and coordinates the introduction of science and advanced technologies in the development of the UAE economy.

During the meeting, President Sarkissian and Minister Al Amir discussed the possibilities of cooperation in the fields of science, technology, natural sciences, and the implementation of joint programs. Minister Al Amiri presented the work carried out by the United Arab Emirates in

the fields of basic sciences and space science, in particular, referred to the historical journey of the UAE "Satellite of Hope" to Mars.

The interlocutors agreed that such ambitious programs are not only an investment for the future, but also a source of inspiration for young people to engage science. President Sarkissian invited the UAE Minister of State to participate in the 6th STARMUS International Festival of Science and Art, scheduled for September in Armenia, one of the goals of which is to direct young people to science, new technologies and the future.

President Sarkissian noted that Armenia



attaches great importance to the spheres of science and technology, considering them a priority from the point of view of our country's future. In this context, the President spoke about the presidential ATOM (Advanced Tomorrow) initiative aimed at scientific and technological development and possible cooperation within that framework. Reference was also made to the opportunities for young scientists to exchange programs and conduct joint research.



Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan has received an invitation to participate in the Antalya Diplomacy Forum this year, Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Vahan Hunanyan confirmed to Armenia Press.

Armenian FM invited to attend Antalya Diplomacy Forum, decision on participation yet to be made – MFA

"Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan has received and continues receiving invitations to participate in different events, including the Antalya Diplomacy Forum this year," Hunanyan said.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said earlier that Armenia was among the invitees to the Forum due March 11-13,

2022.

"The Foreign Ministry of Armenia is discussing the appropriateness of the minister's participation in the aforementioned events in accordance with the respective procedures. The public will be properly informed about the decisions made," the Spokesperson said.

Armenian President announces resignation



President Armen Sarkissian has announced his resignation. The President has issued a statement, which reads, in part:

In the early 1990s, due to major geopolitical changes, our people had the greatest opportunity to establish their own independent state. Our mission was not to replace one flag with another, but to build a country that would ensure the security, progress, and prosperity of Armenians once again, centuries later.

I emphasize that the main meaning of the existence of an independent state is the ability to assume and bear responsibility when we realize that only we, as a single body, are the builders of our victories and culprits of our defeats.

Enthusied by such a historic opportunity, like many of my compatriots, I dedicated myself to that mission. For various reasons, the activity of my participation at various stages changed, but I did not stop believing in our ultimate national success. And that was my chief motivation to accept the proposal to become the President of Armenia.

Making this important decision, I proceeded from the proposal made to me, according to which the new presidential institution would have tools and opportunities to influence foreign political, economic, and investment policy, and relations with the Diaspora, as well as to promote national interests in the international arena, and shape a new scientific-educational and high-tech environment.

Some time later, the April-May events of 2018 took place...

A question may arise why I did not resign at that time. The answer is obvious, because of the responsibility I took on as President of the Republic. I was obliged to do everything in my power to avoid the further deepening of internal division and possible clashes, which could have

extremely negative consequences. I also sought to use the prestige and connections gained through my work of many years, and my international political-economic potential, to build a strong and stable state.

Again, a question may arise as to why the President failed to influence the political events that led us to the current national crisis. The reason is obvious again: the lack of appropriate tools that any state official has with only one document - the Constitution. The roots of some of our significant problems are hidden in the current Basic Law.

We have a paradoxical situation when the President has to be the guarantor of statehood without actually having any real tools. The Constitution also presupposes the supremacy of one institution over another, creates obstacles for well-known Diaspora specialists to participate in the management of state institutions in their historical Homeland, etc.

We are a parliamentary republic in form, but not in content. The purpose of my proposal was not to move from one form of government to another (parliamentary to semi-presidential or presidential), but to create a state system based on checks and balances. Without it, it is difficult to talk about significant achievements because progress and success can be achieved only in the conditions of a predictable and harmonious system.

I am glad that a commission for constitutional amendments has been set up, for which I thank the government. I hope that eventually the constitutional changes will take place, the next president and the presidential institution will be able to work in a more balanced, coordinated environment.

We live in a unique reality, a reality where the President cannot influence matters of war or peace.

A reality, when he cannot veto the laws, he considers inexpedient for the state and the people.

A reality, when the President's opportunities are perceived not as an advantage for the state, but as a threat by various political groups.

A reality where the President is unable to use most of his potential to solve systemic domestic and foreign policy prob-

lems.

A reality where the world is in a constant turbulence zone, but the President does not have a constitutional tool to help his country.

A reality where the head of the state and sometimes his family are targeted by various political groups. They are not so much interested in the achievements of the presidential institution for the benefit of the country, as in my past, various conspiracy theories, and myths. This "concern" for me goes beyond morality, ultimately directly affecting my health.

I have been thinking for a long time and I have decided to resign from the post of the President of the Republic after working actively for about four years.

That decision is not emotional at all, and it follows a certain logic.

The President does not have the necessary tools to influence the radical processes of domestic and foreign policy in these difficult times for the country and the nation.

At this difficult time for our state, when national unity is needed, the presidential institution should not be the target of gossip and conspiracy theories, thus diverting public attention from the most important issues.

Today, more than ever, we need meaningful, deeply thought out, and carefully considered actions. Otherwise, we, the Armenians of the whole world, will not achieve the goal of our mission, we will find ourselves in the margins of history.

We have no right to make mistakes anymore!

In the end, I would like to express my special gratitude to our citizens, our compatriots in the Diaspora, for their perseverance, endurance, patience, and courage in these difficult times for the country.

Special thanks to the soldiers and officers of our brave army, my homage to the families of the heroes who sacrificed their lives for our Motherland.

I also thank all the employees of the Office of the President of the Republic and my colleagues in the state structures for efficient joint work.

Azerbaijan, France in diplomatic row over Pécresse visit to Artsakh

French presidential candidate Valérie Pécresse has filed a complaint against Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev for “death threats” after her visit to Armenia and the Artsakh Republic in mid-December.

“I went to Armenia because the question of Eastern Christians is at the heart of my commitment, because the defense of Armenia is important,” she said on *Europe 1*.

“Had I known that Madame Pécresse was there, we would not have let her go,” Aliyev said, commenting on the visit.

Before that the Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan had handed a note to French



Charge d’Affaires.

Pécresse called Aliyev’s words “shocking.”

On January 18, French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian said in the Parliament that his de-

partment considers the statements of the Azerbaijani side to Pécresse after her trip to Karabakh “unacceptable in form and essence.”

Azerbaijan then accused Minister Le Drian of violating diplomatic ethics by commenting on the words of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

Leyla Abdullayeva, press secretary of the Republic’s Foreign Ministry, called Le Drian’s comments “irresponsible and unacceptable.”



Turkey and Armenia will discuss what further steps can be taken after the resumption of charter flights as part of an ongoing process for the normalization of ties, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu has said, *Hurriyet Daily News* reports.

“In the first meeting of the special envoys, the objectives of this process and expectations from this process were dis-

Turkey, Armenia mull further steps for ‘full’ normalization: Cavusoglu

cussed. The special envoys, in their next meeting, will work on the steps that could be taken following the resumption of flights,” Cavusoglu told reporters following the cabinet meeting late Jan. 18.

Special representatives from Armenia and Turkey, Ruben Rubinyan and Serdar Kilic, respectively, held their first meeting in Moscow on Jan. 14 for the normalization of ties between the two countries through the establishment of diplomatic relations and opening the sealed borders. Both sides have described the first encounter as positive and productive and stated their agreement for the continuation of the

dialogue.

In parallel to these talks, Turkey and Armenia have announced the resumption of charter flights between Istanbul and Yerevan. The first flights will take place on Feb. 2.

“The objective [of the process] is full normalization. The Armenians are also very content with this,” Cavusoglu said. The two special representatives will continue to discuss what other confidence-building measures can be taken to strengthen the existing political process, he added.

Cementing the status of Artsakh as a geopolitical actor a priority – MFA

The Foreign Minister David Babayan on January 19 briefed the journalists on the activities of the Foreign Ministry in 2021, highlighting the works to be carried out in the current year.

“We will continue to actively and persistently defend the interests of Artsakh, our independence and sovereignty, and in every way strengthen the pan-Armenian unity – the Armenia-Artsakh-Diaspora trinity”, David Babayan stressed, speaking about the philosophy of the foreign policy of the Republic of Artsakh in 2022.

According to Minister Babayan, the international recognition of Artsakh, establishing and developing relations with different countries and their entities, deepening ties with the Armenian Diaspora structures and organizations, working

towards the settlement of the Azerbaijan-Karabagh conflict, maintaining and cementing the status of Artsakh as a geopolitical actor will be the main directions of the activities of the Foreign Ministry of Artsakh.

Touching upon the foreign policy strategy and tactics for 2022, the Foreign Minister, in particular, stressed:

“We will pursue a proactive, tough and targeted foreign policy, at the same time, with an information component, which is as restrained as possible and devoid of advertising, guided by the motto of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – “More action, less talk”.”

During the press conference, the Minister answered the journalists’ questions related to the challenges facing the foreign policy of Artsakh in the post-war period,



problems arising in the context of new realities, the negotiation process, the status of Artsakh, and gave the necessary clarifications.

The Minister thanked the media representatives for the close cooperation with the Foreign Ministry and for their work aimed at presenting the stance of Artsakh, expressing hope that the efficient cooperation will be continued.



Congressmen Adam Schiff and Brad Sherman have been honored with Armenian state awards. The orders have been handed by Speaker of the National Assembly Alen Simonyan.

“Thirty years ago, Armenia and America first established diplomatic ties – and

Reps. Schiff and Sherman honored with Armenian state awards

in the years since, our partnerships have only grown stronger. Today, in commemoration of that anniversary, I was awarded the State Order for my work on behalf of the Armenian American community in Congress. I was incredibly humbled by this tremendous honor – and I look forward to continuing the important work of strengthening diplomatic ties between our two nations,” Rep. Schiff said in a Facebook post.

“I was honored to receive Armenia’s State Order medal from Armenian Ambas-

sador to the U.S. Lilit Makunts and President of the Armenian National Assembly Alen Simonyan,” Rep. Sherman said on Twitter.

“The State Order medal commemorates the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and the United States; it was awarded to me by the decree of Armenian President Armen Sarkissian for my efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Armenia relationship,” he added.

US Congressmen deeply concerned about the fate of Armenian prisoners of war

The delegation led by Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly Alen Simonyan met with the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the US House of Representatives Gregory W. Meeks, Reps. Brad Sherman and Chris Smith.

Welcoming the members of the delegation, Mr. Meeks said they have been following the democratic processes in Armenia since 2018 with special attention. He expressed readiness to continue to support these reforms.

Issues related to the 44-day war and its consequences were discussed during the meeting. At the request of American colleagues, Alen Simonyan touched upon the issues of Armenia’s border security, the solution of post-war humanitarian issues and the repatriation of captives held

in Azerbaijan.

The Congressmen stated that the US House of Representatives, and in particular their committee, is deeply concerned about the fate of the prisoners of war and believes that they should be repatriated immediately. The chairman of the commission stressed the importance of ensuring the stability of the South Caucasus and noted that in this context it is necessary to reach a solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and a lasting settlement of the issue. The United States will greatly contribute to this, including in the format of the OSCE Minsk Group, he said.

Alen Simonyan stressed the importance of recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the US House of Representatives, emphasizing the role of the Foreign Affairs



Committee in the issue.

At the end of the meeting, Alen Simonyan said that a number of events and mutual visits are planned within the framework of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and the United States. The National Assembly President invited the Chairman and members of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee to visit Armenia to get acquainted with the existing problems and democratic achievements on the ground.HRC, for a three-year period of 2020-2022.



There is no better way of finding solutions in a conflict situation rather than talking, Armenian President Armen Sarkissian said in an interview with Sky News Arabia.

“But unfortunately, in real life, when Armenia and Azerbaijan had a talking plat-

Negotiations the best way to finding solutions: Armenian President talks to Sky News Arabia

form and opportunity – the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship – we didn’t succeed and ended up with a war, the worst case scenario,” the President said.

He noted that thousands of young lives were lost, while talking, diplomacy, negotiations could have solved the issue without these young people losing their lives.

The President hopes the ongoing negotiations will lead to sustainable, pragmatic peace, but adds that “it’s difficult.”

As for Armenia’s relations with Turkey, President Sarkissian reiterated there is no way other than talking. He adds, however,

that signing any agreement with Turkey is difficult without the support of the Diaspora, which was mostly created as a result of the Armenian Genocide.

“Armenia is a small state, but a much bigger nation. There are as many Armenians living in the US and Russia as in Armenia,” the President said.

“I hope that one day Armenia and Turkey will succeed, but in order to succeed, we cannot ignore the historic facts. To succeed we need to be pragmatic to achieve sustainable relations,” President Sarkissian noted.

Armenia, Cyprus reach agreements on military-technical cooperation

Armenia and Cyprus have reached a number of agreements on further cooperation in military-technical sphere.

A delegation led by the Chief of General Staff of the National Guard of the Republic of Cyprus, Lieutenant General Democritos Zervakis arrived in Armenia on January 18.

After the official welcoming ceremony held on January 19 in the administrative complex of the RA Ministry of Defense, Lieutenant General Democritos Zervakis met with the Chief of the General Staff of the RA Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Artak Davtyan.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to regional security and military cooperation. The Cypriot side was briefed on the situation after the 44-day war and the challenges in the region.

The directions of cooperation aimed at strengthening the combat effectiveness of the armed forces of the two countries in order to effectively meet the existing



challenges were also discussed. The parties attached importance to both bilateral and trilateral Armenia-Cyprus-Greece cooperation initiated in 2019, within the framework of which a number of events have already been implemented in 2021.

The delegation led by the Chief of the General Staff of the National Guard of the Republic of Cyprus was received by the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Suren Papikyan. The defense minister thanked the Cypriot side for its clear position on the Artsakh issue and for

its support in the international arena, reaffirmed the positions of the Armenian side on the Cyprus issue and the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

The RA Minister of Defense stressed the importance of bilateral military-technical cooperation, expressed the readiness of the Armenian side to resume the work of the inter-governmental commission.

Lieutenant General Democritos Zervakis reaffirmed the readiness of the Cypriot side to develop cooperation in all directions and initiate new areas.

During the meeting, a number of agreements on further cooperation were reached, which will be implemented this year.

The delegation led by Lieutenant General Democritos Zervakis visited the memorial to the victims of the Armenian Genocide and visited a number of military units of the RA Ministry of Defense.

U.S. Global Peace Operations Initiative donates \$665,000 worth of equipment to Armenia's expeditionary military medical unit

U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Lynne M. Tracy and U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Edward Vaughan, Deputy Director of Plans, Policy, Strategy and Capabilities at United States European Command, participated on January 19, 2022, in a ceremony at the Central Military Hospital to mark the donation of \$665,000 worth of medical equipment from U.S. Global Peace Operations Initiative to Armenia's expeditionary military medical unit. The equipment includes defibrillators, X-ray machines, tents, generators, lights, and other supplies.

In her remarks Ambassador Tracy highlighted the courage and dedication of Armenia's military medical personnel. "You seek to heal and treat your fellow soldiers and airmen, putting others ahead of yourself. We hope that this equipment will save



and improve many Armenian lives," Ambassador Tracy said.

"This equipment will assist the Armenian military in saving lives by providing the best possible medical care to its service members, and it further demonstrates the U.S. engagement with our Armenian partners," General Vaughan stated.

This event marks the most recent chapter of our long-standing partnership with Armenia and joint efforts to modernize Armenia's civilian and military medical and disaster response capabilities. Over the past year, United States European Command, through the Embassy's Office of Defense Cooperation, has also made large donations of anti-coronavirus protective and diagnostic equipment to Armenian hospitals and built or renovated several fire and rescue stations, among other security cooperation initiatives.

Besides the donation ceremony, General Vaughan met with senior officials from the Armenian Ministries of Defense and Emergency Situations and Defense Staff and discussed U.S.-Armenian security partnership.

Moody's assigns Ba3 rating to Export Insurance Agency of Armenia; outlook stable

Moody's Investors Service ("Moody's") has today assigned Ba3 foreign and local-currency insurance financial strength ratings (IFSRs) to Export Insurance Agency of Armenia ICJSC (EIA). The outlook is stable.

EIA's Ba3 IFSRs reflect (1) its b1 Baseline Credit Assessment (BCA), and (2) moderate probability of support from the government of Armenia (Ba3 stable), resulting in a notch uplift above the BCA.

Ratings rationale

EIA is currently the only export insurance company in Armenia. It was established by the government to promote Armenian export within the framework of the export-oriented industrial policy of the republic of Armenia.

EIA's b1 BCA benefits from its solid capital adequacy relative to net total exposure with 90% of insurance risk reinsured by Swiss Reinsurance Company Ltd (Swiss Re, Aa3 stable), as well as sound financial flexibility and low financial leverage. At the same time, these strengths are tempered by the company's modest size in global terms, low granularity of its insurance book and limited geographical diversification, investments in high-risk assets in Armenia and weak underwriting profitability.

EIA provides export and pre-export credit insurance against political and commercial risks. Its share in GPW of credit insurance sector in Armenia (including loan insurance and other financial losses insurance) amounted to around 50% as of Q3 2021.

The insurer's diversification is constrained by its limited geographical and products diversification with some sizeable single-name exposure. It has concentrations of export exposure in Russia (Baa3 stable), given the structure of Armenia's exports and long-standing relations with Russia.

EIA's asset-quality metrics reflect a



high concentration of its investments in domestic assets, which mainly comprise current accounts and deposits with Armenia-based banks and investments in local bonds issued by the government of Armenia. The company's high-risk investments, mainly deposits with local banks, accounted for around 138% of its equity as of 31 December 2020.

The insurer has strong capital adequacy benefitting from the significant portion of insurance risk exposure reinsured by Swiss Re. The company's shareholders' equity as a proportion of total assets (equity-to-assets ratio) has been consistently high at above 60%. EIA's underwriting leverage is robust at 0.02x as of end 2020 compared with that of global peers, driven by a low level of insurance risk relative to its capital.

EIA's underwriting profitability is weak with its credit insurance combined ratio of 162% in 2020, albeit the trend is improving. Poor underwriting profitability reflects the company's still low scale of business operations and challenging operating environment in Armenia.

The assignment of new ratings to EIA also takes into account the effectiveness of its governance as part of Moody's assessment of environmental, social and gover-

nance (ESG) considerations. Moody's does not have any particular governance concerns for EIA.

Government support

Moody's assigns a moderate probability of government support resulting in a one notch uplift above EIA's BCA. This is based on the current full ownership of EIA by the Government of Armenia (Ba3 stable) and its public policy role in promoting Armenian export within the framework of the Export-Oriented Industrial Policy of the Government of Armenia. In the future the government has indicated that it may seek investment from international investors, but the state will continue to hold a controlling stake of not less than 51%. EIA's Chair of the Board of Directors is Deputy Minister of Economy three out of seven board members are representatives from the Ministry of Economy. There is no track record of government support in terms of provided guarantees or capital increase.

Stable outlook

The stable rating outlook on EIA's IFSR is in line with the stable outlook on Armenia's Ba3 sovereign rating. It also reflects Moody's expectation that EIA will maintain its current financial metrics within the next 12-18 months.

Apple Pay now available in Armenia

Apple Pay is now available in Armenia. A number of Armenian banks have announced that Apple Pay, a safer, more secure and private way to pay is now available to customers.

Customers will thus avoid handing their payment card to someone else, touching physical buttons or exchanging cash — and uses the power of iPhone to protect every transaction. Customers simply hold their iPhone or Apple Watch near a payment terminal to make a contactless payment.

Every Apple Pay purchase is secure because it is authenticated with Face ID, Touch ID, or device passcode, as well as a one-time unique dynamic security code. Apple Pay is accepted in grocery stores, pharmacies, taxis, restaurants, coffee shops, retail stores, and many more places.

Customers can also use Apple Pay on



iPhone, iPad, and Mac to make faster and more convenient purchases in apps or on the web in Safari without having to create accounts or repeatedly type in shipping and billing information. Apple Pay makes it easier to pay for food and grocery deliveries, online shopping, transportation, and parking, among other things.

Apple Pay can also be used to make payments in apps on Apple Watch. Security and privacy are at the core of Apple Pay. When customers use a credit or debit card with Apple Pay, the actual card numbers are not stored on the device, nor on Apple servers. Instead, a unique Device Account Number is assigned, encrypted, and securely stored in the Secure Element, an industry-standard, certified chip designed to store the payment information safely on the device.

Apple Pay is easy to set up. On iPhone, simply open the Wallet app, tap +, and follow the steps to add the bank's credit or debit cards. Once a customer adds a card to iPhone, Apple Watch, iPad, and Mac, they can start using Apple Pay on that device right away.

Armenia, UAE reach agreements on large-scale projects in renewable energy

The working visit of President Armen Sarkissian to the United Arab Emirates was marked by a number of practical agreements, particularly in the field of renewable energy.

The Emirati company Masdar, one of the leading international companies in the field of renewable energy, has already launched the "Ayg-1" project for the construction of a 200-megawatt photovoltaic power plant in the field of renewable energy in Armenia, the agreement on which was reached in 2019 during the President Sarkissian's visit to the United Arab Emirates. Back then, Armen Sarkissian said the program was only the beginning of a great journey and noted that it was possible to do much more together.

During a recent working visit to the UAE, the President of Armenia met with



the CEO of Masdar Mohamed Jamil Al Ramah and reached an agreement on the construction of another 200-megawatt solar photovoltaic plant in Armenia.

The 400-megawatt solar power plant projects in Armenia require large investments. They are also of strategic importance for increasing the security of the country's energy system, the level of independence, as well as for the diversification of the energy sector. These programs will

also help make Armenia greener.

During his visit to the UAE, the President discussed the possibility of large-scale investments in wind energy with the CEO of Mubadala Investment Company, Khaldoon Khalifa Al Mubarak, in particular, the construction of an additional 500-megawatt plant. President Sarkissian noted that Armenia has a huge

potential for clean energy resources.

According to the agreement reached during the working visit to the United Arab Emirates, Wizz Air Abu Dhabi will start operating flights to Yerevan in the near future.

In general, the working visit of the President of the Republic to the UAE is a practical step towards closer relations with the Arab world and strengthening cooperation.

Lighthouse on Crete, city hall of Alexandroupoli light up in colors of Armenian flag



On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Greece and Armenia, the famous lighthouse of the city of Chania on the island of Crete and the building of the city hall of Alexandroupoli in northeastern Greece were illuminated in the colors of the Armenian flag, the Armenian Embassy in Greece reports.

The diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Hellenic Republic were established on January 20, 1992. Cooperation between the two friendly countries is developing dynamically and includes political, defense, trade and economic, education, science, culture, tourism, and a number of other spheres of mutual interest. There is a strong legal framework between the two countries: Armenia and Greece have signed more than 40 legal documents so far.

The Armenian-Greek Intergovernmental Commission on economic, industrial, technical and scientific cooperation is functioning effectively.

The political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Armenia and Greece are held regularly.

Inter-parliamentary relations

There are friendship groups operating in the parliaments of the two countries. The head of the Armenia-Greece friendship group of the National Assembly of Armenia is Mkhitar Hayrapetyan, while in the Greek parliament the head of the group is Dimitrios Markopoulos.

On April 25, 1966, the Greek Parliament passed a resolution recognizing the April 24, 1915 as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day. On September 9, 2014 a

bill was adopted against the denial of the Armenian Genocide criminalizing racism and xenophobia.

In March, 2015 the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia unanimously adopted a statement condemning the genocide of the Greek-Assyrians by the Ottoman Empire.

Multilateral cooperation



Cooperation in the international platforms and multilateral formats plays an important role in the Armenian-Greek relations. Both Armenia and Greece have largely consistent approaches to many issues on the international agenda.

Armenia attaches great importance to Greece's consistent efforts towards the agenda of the prevention of genocides and crimes against humanity.

In 2015, at the 69th session of the UN General Assembly in New York, Greece co-authored the resolution on Declaring an International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, which was initiated by the Republic of Armenia, and in 2018 at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Greece has co-authored the resolution on "The Prevention of Genocide".

Armenia also values the active role

of Greece in the context of strengthening the Armenia-EU relations and the Armenia-NATO dialogue, including the cooperation in the field of peacekeeping.

On July 7, 2020, the Greek Parliament ratified the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Extended Partnership Agreement, which is a new legal basis for the relations with the EU and the EU member states.

Armenia-Greece-Cyprus trilateral cooperation

Armenia-Greece close cooperation is also ongoing within the Armenia-Greece-Cyprus trilateral format. On June 24, 2019 the first trilateral meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Armenia, Greece and Cyprus took place in Nicosia as a result of which a joint statement was issued, which emphasizes that the sole purpose of the trilateral cooperation is to promote peace, stability and prosperity through the extensive political dialogue and partnership between the participating states.

On September 25, 2019 the second trilateral meeting of the Foreign Ministers took place in New York within the framework of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly.

The first Armenia-Greece-Cyprus trilateral summit is planned to be held in Armenia.

Armenia values UN support to the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs format

Armenia values the consistent support of the UN and the Secretary-General to the central role of the internationally mandated format of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs in promoting comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Armenia's Permanent representative to the UN Mher Margaryan said during the discussion of the Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization.

"As the international community has embarked on the long path of recovery, the United Nations continues to exercise its vital role in coordinating and leading the global efforts to respond to health, socio-economic, humanitarian and other consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Establishment of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and elaboration of socio-economic response plans to support inclusive and sustainable recovery were instrumental in mobilizing and channeling the necessary resources to reach the most vulnerable," the Armenian envoy said.

"We appreciate the cooperation and support of the UN development system in operationalizing the COVAX facility to ensure vaccine deployment to many countries, including Armenia. I also want to appreciate and express my support to the PGA's new year resolution on Vaccine Equity, and hope that it will contribute to making vaccines available for all. Effective and responsible multilateralism with the United Nations at its core is crucial for fulfilling the aspirations of people to build back a better world," he added,

Mher Margaryan noted that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains an overarching framework for achieving a better future that leaves no one behind. /;The international community needs to amplify its efforts to get back on track in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. I would like to emphasize the importance of a stronger focus to the needs of countries in special situations, including the landlocked developing countries, which have been particularly affected due to their systemic vulnerabilities."

On the maintenance of international peace and security Armenia's Representa-

tive said "the Secretary-General's appeal for an immediate global ceasefire, endorsed by the Security Council resolutions 2532 (2020) and 2565 (2021), was crucial initiative to enable humanitarian access and assistance to the most vulnerable, in particularly those trapped in conflicts and crises."

"Unfortunately, the overwhelming support of the international community to this timely initiative was not translated into cessation of hostilities in all corners of the world. On the contrary, in our region we were faced by brutal aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh in the fall of 2020, which devastated entire communities, causing many deaths, thousands of displaced, destruction of the critical infrastructure and a major humanitarian crisis. Obstruction and politicization of the humanitarian access to Nagorno-Karabakh has prevented the provision of comprehensive assistance of the United Nations to the affected people up to this day," he stressed.

"The pandemic has exacerbated divisions, tensions and structural inequalities, leading to the growth of hate speech, xenophobia, violations of human rights and conflicts. Among the new tendencies is the distortion and manipulation of the international law to justify brutal use of force, identity-based hate crimes and atrocities, employment of terrorists and mercenaries to suppress the inalienable right to self-determination and attempts to isolate war-torn population from the international community. The challenges to the multilateralism underscore the importance for the United Nations strengthened role as the guardian of the international law and its core values," Amb. Margaryan continued.

He emphasized that Armenia welcomes the Secretary-General's new Agenda for Peace, with a strong focus on prevention, which also highlights the role of the regional arrangements under chapter VIII of the UN Charter. In this context, Armenia values the consistent support of the Secretary-General and the United Nations to the central role of the internationally mandated format of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs in promoting comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Kara-



bakh conflict.

"The resilience of the Organization against the attempts of manipulations trying to legitimize the consequences of the aggression and war crimes is crucial for its credibility and moral stance in countering false narratives, violence on ethnic and religious grounds and attempts to impose unilateral solutions in utter disregard to the norms of international law," the envoy noted.

"We commend Secretary-General's leadership in promoting and protecting human rights, achieving gender equality and full empowerment of women and girls in all spheres of public life. We also appreciate the transformative measures outlined in his report on "Our Common Agenda", related to the promotion of full realization of women's rights and gender parity, facilitating women's economic inclusion and eradication of violence against women and girls," he added.

"We acknowledge the efforts of the Secretary-General to further pursue ambitious reform agenda and develop new capabilities promoting agility, integration and cohesion across the UN system. The ability of the UN to quickly respond to the evolving challenges and new emergencies and effectively deliver on its mandates requires the Organization to be properly equipped with the necessary means and timely fulfillment of obligations by member states to overcome the financial crisis of the United Nations. We share the assessment that repurposing existing funds and adopting less rigid budgetary procedures can also contribute to better and efficient use of available resources," Ambassador Margaryan added.

In conclusion, he reaffirmed Armenia's support to the Secretary-General in strengthening the efficiency of the Organization and its adaptability to future global challenges.

ANCA urges congressional leaders to press Biden Administration on Armenia/Artsakh policy failures

The Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) is calling on Congress to press the Biden Administration to address dramatic shortfalls in U.S. policy to the South Caucasus which continue to undermine US interests, aid and abet ongoing Azerbaijani aggression, and undermine the security of Armenia and Artsakh.



In a letter to Congressional leaders, ANCA Chairman Raffi Hamparian called on Senators and Representatives to secure answers to twelve pressing questions covering a broad range of topics yet to be meaningfully addressed by the Biden Administration, including:

— Why has the Administration not called out Azerbaijan as the belligerent party, when its President Ilham Aliyev regularly and openly boasts about his offensive attack on Artsakh?

— As a candidate, President Biden called on the Trump Administration to fully enforce Section 907 – stating, on October 28, 2020, that “The [Trump] administration must fully implement and not waive requirements under section 907 of the Freedom Support Act to stop the flow of military equipment to Azerbaijan.” Where does the Administration stand regarding enforcement of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act?

— USAID has reported that 90,000 Armenians were displaced during the Artsakh conflict, resulting in what it describes as an “acute humanitarian crisis.” Why has U.S. aid to Artsakh been so very low, and what exactly are the Administration’s plans to provide adequate humanitarian and developmental aid to Artsakh, including to Armenians ethnically-cleansed from their indigenous Artsakh homeland?

— Does the Administration consider Armenians held by Azerbaijan to be Prisoners of War, entitled to protections under the Third Geneva Convention and other international treaties? If so, has the U.S. government communicated our expectation to the Azerbaijani government that it must abide by its international commitments to immediately and unconditionally release all POWs?

— What has the Administration done to investigate and hold accountable U.S. manufacturers, the Turkish and Azerbaijani governments, and other stakeholders for potential violations of U.S. laws related to the discovery of U.S. parts in Turkish drones deployed by Azerbaijan.

— What has the Administration done to investigate and hold Turkey’s and Azerbaijan’s leaders accountable for recruiting foreign terrorist fighters and for deploying cluster bombs, white phosphorous, and other prohibited munitions against Artsakh?

— What has the Administration done to hold Azerbaijan’s leaders accountable for invading and occupying sovereign Armenian territory?

— What steps has the Administration taken to publicly confront Turkey’s ongoing denial and obstruction of justice for the Armenian Genocide, consistent with H.Res.296 (2019) and S.Res.150 (2019)

calling upon the United States to “reject efforts to enlist, engage, or otherwise associate the United States Government with denial of the Armenian Genocide or any other genocide.”

— What steps has the Administration taken to “encourage education and public understanding of the facts of the Armenian Genocide, including the United States role in the hu-

manitarian relief effort, and the relevance of the Armenian Genocide to modern-day crimes against humanity,” consistent with H.Res.296 (2019) and S.Res.150 (2019)?

— What actions is the Administration taking to ensure that justice is served in U.S. courts and via other avenues regarding members of Turkish President Recep Erdogan’s security detail, who were charged with committing felony assaults against peaceful U.S. protesters on May 16, 2017, in Washington, DC’s Sheridan Circle?

— A December 17, 2021 letter from the Federal Aviation Administration’s Office of Commercial Space Transportation to the ANCA and other coalition partners noted that the Department of State and other U.S. agencies “had no issues” with the planned SpaceX launch of the Turksat-5B satellite. Did the Administration, as part of this review, consider the implications of this launch upon the range and lethality of Turkey’s drone fleet?

— Has the Administration offered to make satellite imaging and other resources available to researchers and scholars documenting, monitoring, protecting, preserving, and raising awareness about threats to Armenian churches and other holy and cultural sites in areas of Artsakh that are currently under Azerbaijani military control?



FBI raid on House Democrat's home said to be related to Azerbaijan probe

A federal grand jury in Washington is investigating the matter, but it's unclear if Cuellar is a target of the grand jury's probe, ABC News was told.

After FBI agents executed a search warrant at Cuellar's home in Laredo, Texas, an aide to Cuellar said in a statement that the congressman "will fully cooperate in any investigation."

"He is committed to ensuring that justice and the law are upheld," the statement said.

On Wednesday, an FBI spokesperson emphasized that any "law enforcement activity" at Cuellar's home and campaign office was "court-authorized."

Cuellar, who represents Texas' 28th Congressional District along the U.S.-Mexico border, has been in Congress since 2005. In recent years he has served as a co-chair of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, and repeatedly met with Azerbaijan officials, including the ambassador of Azerbaijan, Elin Suleymanov.

The FBI on January 19 raided Democratic Congressman Henry Cuellar's home and campaign office in Texas as part of a wide-ranging federal probe relating to Azerbaijan and several U.S. businessmen, ABC News quotes a source familiar with the matter as saying.

Berlin's Humboldt University sued over Azerbaijan connection

FragDerStaat, a platform run by Open Knowledge Foundation Germany, has filed a lawsuit with the administrative against Berlin's Humboldt University over its Azerbaijani connection.

For more than ten years, the Azerbaijani state financed a chair in "History of Azerbaijan" at the renowned Berlin Humboldt University (HU) through its German embassy. At the end of September, the controversial holder of the professorship at the Institute for Historical Studies, Eva-Maria Auch, ended her job.

Among other things, the HU Berlin gave in to the great criticism of the endowed chair, including from the university itself. The



university's Student Council called it a "lobby chair that aligns itself with the nationalist narratives of the authoritarian Aliyev regime."

"If the HU hopes that the dissolution of the chair will also end the debate about its connections to the authoritarian state, it was wrong. The university still does not want to publish the contract for the estab-

lishment of the chair, which has brought HU 100,000 to 150,000 euros annually since 2010. It can be viewed on the university premises, but the Azerbaijani embassy has objected to releasing the 'diplomatic document'," FragDerStaat said.

Therefore, with the support of the Society for Freedom Rights, it has filed a lawsuit against the HU with the administrative court, claiming that foundation contract is of course not a diplomatic document – and the HU is not a diplomatic representation – and transparency about teaching agreements should actually be in the interest of a democratic university.

AUA Library launches 'Digitizing Armenian Linguistic Heritage' project



The American University of Armenia Languages and Civilizations (INALCO),

(AUA) AGBU Papazian Library has announced the launch of the project titled *Digitizing Armenian Linguistic Heritage (DALiH): Armenian Multivariational Corpus and Data Processing*, coordinated by Victoria Khurshudyan, National Institute for Oriental

SeDyL.

Funded by the French National Research Agency, the project aims to build the first-ever open-access and open-source unified digital linguistic platform for the whole spectrum of the Armenian language variations. In particular, annotated corpora will be compiled for Classical Armenian and Modern Western Armenian, as well as a pilot corpus for Middle Armenian, three pilot corpora for dialects, and an updated Modern Eastern Armenian corpus on the basis

➔ page 13

page 12 ➡ of the existing one.

As a project partner, the Digital Library of Classical Armenian Literature (Digilib) of AUA will provide its collection of digitized texts in Classical Armenian and Western Armenian. Additionally, Digilib will support the implementation of the DALiH project through the digitization of other relevant materials.

“Discussions about the project started during the ‘Digital Armenian’ conference held in Paris in October 2018. I am excited that our efforts in making the project of Digitizing Armenian Linguistic Heritage a reality have paid off, and we can now announce its successful launch,” states

Hovhannes Kizogyan, technical director of Digilib. “We plan to organize workshops for linguists in computational technology to equip them with the skills needed for the project.”

Within the DALiH project, research will be conducted in Natural language processing (NLP) and linguistic perspectives so as to provide full grammatical annotation and Automatic speech recognition (ASR) models in the above-mentioned Armenian varieties. “Multi-approach deep-learning and rule-based resources will be designed in order to process the written and oral databases and to cross-check their value for further corpus en-

largement, in a context of multiparameter language variation for an under-resourced language,” was mentioned in the [press release issued by the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations \(INALCO\)](#), the coordinating organization of the project.

NLP-based linguistic research, in particular on the automatic identification of the language, the calculation of the distance between varieties, and the lexical and morphological disambiguation, will be conducted with an aim to revisit the state of existing research issues and to introduce new problems supported by the written and oral data made available by the project.

Dr. Armen Kherlopian from NASA-backed Institute joins Armenian Musk Factor series

Dr. Armen Kherlopian, who serves on the Scientific Advisory Board of NASA-backed TRISH (Translational Research Institute for Space Health), has joined the creative staff of the sci-fi satiric comedy Musk Factor. Dr. Kherlopian is a biophysics expert focusing on ensuring both astronaut performance and space tourist safety, and is now a part of the Musk Factor team as a science consultant.

“The multi-part film takes place in 2032. I’m looking forward to helping the Musk Factor team as per perspective on how different space technologies can be developed and how that may look in the future. It’s an absolutely fascinating topic, and the series here attempts to visualize the technologies of the future and warn us about the consequences of their influence in the form of satire,” the Armenian scientist says.

The producer of the series, Rafael Tadevosyan, emphasizes that the theories present in the Musk Factor Universe are written as science fiction. For example, in the Musk Factor plotline there is a consideration for Einstein’s theory of relativity and an implicit question of whether there was a way to surpass the speed of

light known as 299,792,458 m/s as to help advance the narrative. A related discovery in the story leads to exploration of new technologies and challenges for the characters.

Dr. Kherlopian is actively involved in the development and [acceleration of the Armenian technology sector](#), engaging at the intersection of academia, industry, and society. His work focuses on something not of science fiction, namely, the support of startup unicorns which are companies that grow fast and that also consider advanced technology.



NBA veteran Rex Kalamian named head coach of Armenian national team

Detroit Pistons assistant coach Rex Kalamian has been named the new head coach of the Armenian national team, the Basketball Federation of Armenia informs.

Kalamian is a well-traveled NBA veteran in coaching circles, serving stints with the Los Angeles Clippers, Sacramento Kings, Denver Nuggets, Toronto Raptors, Oklahoma City Thunder and Minnesota Timberwolves over 28 years. Kalamian has focused mostly on the defensive side of the ball during his coaching



career.

Kalamian will continue his duties with

the Pistons and will coach the Armenian National team during the offseason.

Under the new coach, the Armenian national team will take part in the European Championship of Small Countries, which will be held from June 28 to July 3 in Ta-Kali, Malta.

Kalamian told ESPN that his grandmother fled the Armenian genocide as a teenager and moved to the United States and that both his parents are Bronx-born Armenian-Americans.

Canadian-Armenian Sisian Boghossian appointed Head of Armenia's Tourism Committee

Canadian-Armenian specialist Sisian Boghossian has been appointed Head of Armenia's Tourism Committee. A relevant order has been signed by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

Sisian Boghossian is a participant of the iGorts program of the Diaspora High Commissioner's Office, which allows Diaspora specialists to work for Armenian Government.

For the last few months, Sisian



has been working at the Tourism Committee of the RA Ministry of Economy, and her professionalism led to being appointed to this official position, Diaspora High Commissioner's Office says.

The iGorts program breaks down the yearlong barrier between Diaspora specialists and the Armenian government, and gives Diaspora Armenian professionals the opportunity to play a decisive role in Armenia's government.

Ladaniva: Armenian band wins Public Choice prize at Music Moves Europe Awards

Armenian band Ladaniva received the Public Choice at Music Moves Europe Awards, the EU prize for popular and contemporary music.

The aim of the awards is to celebrate upcoming European artists and support them in developing their international careers.

The awards, co-funded by the European Union, were judged by a panel including Mad Cool Festival booker Cindy Castillo Núñez, BBC Radio 1 presenter Gemma Bradley and Spotify head of artist & industry partnerships Bryan Johnson.

The acts to win awards were Denise Chaila from Ireland, Hungary's DEVA, Mezerg from France, Blanks from The Netherlands and Alina Pash from Ukraine.

The Grand Jury Prize was awarded to Belgium's Meskerem Mees, while the Public Choice award was given to Ladaniva from Armenia.

Previous winners include Adele, Mumford & Sons and Dua Lipa.

The Music Moves Europe Award winners receive € 10.000, - each. The winner of the Grand Jury Award wins an additional green touring voucher worth € 5.000. The winner of the Public Choice Award receives € 5.000. Each nominee is also offered the opportunity to attend a training day at Eurosonic Noorderslag (ESNS) to further their skills in internationalizing their careers, representing a value of € 1.250 per artist. The Business Education Training Day includes keynotes, expert



meetings and training sessions.

Ladaniva is a multicultural band creating world music with a fresh touch of Armenian folk and other traditional forms, including maloya, Balkanbeat, reggae, Arabic, and African influences. The group was founded in October 2019 by Armenian singer Jacqueline Baghdasaryan and French multi-instrumentalist Louis Thomas. Ladaniva immediately became famous with the song 'Vay Aman', which presented a fresh style and a new approach to world music.

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