

EU boosts aid to Armenia



BELGIUM – Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan (L) is welcomed by EU Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini at the start of an EU-Armenia Partnership Council meeting in Brussels, June 13, 2019.

The European Union on June 13 announced 25 million euros (\$28 million) in additional assistance to Armenia and expressed its readiness to finance large-scale infrastructure projects proposed by the Armenian government.

The EU foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, hailed “democratic reforms” implemented in Armenia after chairing, together with Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, a second session of the EU-Armenia Partnership Council.

The council is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the landmark Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed by the two sides in 2017.

The CEPA offers the South Caucasus state the prospect of a closer relationship with the EU in return for major political and economic reforms. It commits Yerevan to gradually “approximating” Armenian economic laws and regulations to the EU’s legal framework.

“The implementation of our agreement is proceeding well,” Mogherini told a joint news conference with Mnatsakanyan in Brussels. “The dialogue, cooperation and partnership we have on different issues ... is excellent, and we also have good plans for the future.”

“Based on the country’s performance, democratic reforms during the last year, the EU will allocate an additional 25 million euros this year, bringing the total allocation for this year to 65 million euros, to support Armenia in its reforms and in implementing effectively our agreement,” Mogherini said.

Joint press statement following the second Partnership Council meeting between the EU and Armenia

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Former French lawmaker René Rouquet granted Armenian citizenship

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received former French parliamentarian and former Mayor of Alfortville René Rouquet.

The Prime Minister noted that Mr. Rouquet had paid over 30 visits to Armenia and Artsakh since 1989. “But this visit is special for you. Today you are being offered a passport of the citizen of the Republic of Armenia; you are no longer our unconditional friend, but also a fellow citizen,” the Prime Minister said and handed the RA citizen’s passport to René Rouquet. Congratulating Mr. Rouquet on this occasion, Nikol Pashinyan thanked him for his years-long pro-Armenian activities.



Thankful for high appreciation of his activities, René Rouquet said: “It is a great honor for me to get an Armenian passport. I started my parliamentary career as early as at the age of 35, and I have been advocating the Armenian cause ever since. I have

kept in close touch with the Armenians in Alfortville, and I see Armenian people as my close relatives and friends.”

René Rouquet assured that he would carry on with his pro-Armenian activities by voicing and seeking solutions to the concerns of the Armenian people. Prime Minister Pashinyan emphasized that Armenia appreciates Mr. Rouquet’s activity, and this passport is the reflection of that appreciation.

The interlocutors took the opportunity to exchange views on the furtherance of Armenian-French friendly relations.

PM Pashinyan, Bundestag Vice President discuss issues of bilateral interest



Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan received the delegation led by the Vice President of the German Bundestag Thomas Oppermann.

As Noyan Tapan was informed from the Office of the Prime Minister of Armenia, the PM welcomed the visit of Thomas Oppermann to Armenia, noting that it’s a very good opportunity to continue the dialogue of future development of Armenian-German relations, which has become quite intensive in the recent period. Nikol Pashinyan recalled that during the last one year he and German Chancellor Angela Merkel paid mutual visits, President of the National Assembly of Armenia paid a visit to Germany and the President of the Constitutional Court of Germany visited Armenia. The Head of the Executive

highlighted bilateral cooperation in various spheres and emphasized particularly the cooperation in the sphere of the judicial system in this period. “Judicial reforms are of key importance for us. For finalizing the democratic changes in our country, it is necessary to have a judicial system that will enjoy public trust”, the PM said, adding that Armenia closely cooperates with the EU and the CoE in that direction. Nikol Pashinyan expressed conviction that with the support of the European partners the Government will succeed in those efforts.

According to the Vice President of the German Bundestag, the developments in Armenia are of major interest among the European community. “Particularly, the Germans have a great sympathy

towards the changes in Armenia, and hope that Armenia will be successful. We want to see your country a progressive country and will do everything to assist Armenia. The Armenian Government is on the right path to judicial reforms, since it’s impossible to make achievements without independent judicial system”, Thomas Oppermann said.

Nikol Pashinyan added that after the German Bundestag adopted a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide in 2016 Germany has conquered a special place in the hearts of Armenians. According to PM Pashinyan, the resolution of the Bundestag is of major importance in terms of the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

During the meeting the sides also referred to Nagorno Karabakh conflict settlement process. Nikol Pashinyan and Thomas Oppermann highlighted the peaceful settlement of the conflict and respecting the ceasefire regime, assessing it inadmissible the recent escalation on the contact line. PM Pashinyan underlined the importance of implementing the agreement of the Vienna summit in 2016 on creating mechanisms investigating ceasefire regime violation cases.

The Vice President of the Bundestag expressed conviction that the atmosphere of mutual confidence will give a constructive nature to the negotiations and lead to de-escalation of situation.

PM Pashinyan assessed the full participation of all the sides in the negotiation process a key precondition for the settlement of the conflict.

Armenian, Azerbaijani FM's to meet in Washington on June 20



The foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan have agreed to meet in Washington on June 20 amid increased ceasefire violations in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone.

The foreign ministries of the two warring nations announced the date and venue of the widely anticipated talks on June 14.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry said Azerbaijan's "provocative" actions along "the line of contact" around Karabakh have created an "unfavorable environment"

ahead of the talks. It referred to an upsurge in skirmishes there which began two weeks ago after several months of relative calm.

Two soldiers of Karabakh's Armenian-backed army were shot dead on June 1 and June 13. The Azerbaijani military has also reported two combat deaths within its ranks in the two-week period. The two sides have accused each other of using not only small arms but also mortars.

The Karabakh Defense Army has said that Azerbaijani forces also fired dozens of

rocket-propelled grenades. In a statement released on Wednesday, the army also said that Azerbaijani helicopters and unmanned aircraft have flown dangerous close to its frontline positions.

Tensions on the frontlines had eased significantly following the first meeting of Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev held in Tajikistan in September. The two leaders also talked on four other occasions in the following months, raising some hopes about progress in the protracted Karabakh peace process.

Their foreign ministers, Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and Elmar Mammadyarov, have also met on a regular basis in the presence of U.S., Russian and French diplomats co-heading the OSCE Minsk Group.

The three mediators discussed preparations for the next Mnatsakanyan-Mammad-yarov meeting when they visited Yerevan, Stepanakert and Baku late last month. In a joint statement, they said they presented the conflicting parties with "proposals for concrete next steps in the settlement process."

Investigative Committee sends second questioning summons to Tsarukyan



A law-enforcement agency has again summoned Prosperous Armenia Party (BHK) leader Gagik Tsarukyan for interrogation over an arson attack reported ahead of a June 9 local election.

The election was held in the town of Abovyan where Tsarukyan has long held sway. Abovyan's BHK-backed incumbent Mayor Vahagn Gevorgyan narrowly defeated his main challenger Grigor Gulyan, who was nominated by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Civil Contract party.

The car and apartment door of Gulyan's election campaign manager were set on fire early on Saturday.

The Investigative Committee planned to question Tsarukyan as a witness in the case on Wednesday evening. However, the wealthy businessman leading Armenia's largest parliamentary opposition force did not show up for interrogation.

Tsarukyan said on Friday that he was offended by the summons because he suspects that investigators deliberately avoid identifying those responsible for the incident. "They offended me by sending the notification," he told reporters. "Let them send it to the right place."

Tsarukyan stood by his claims that the attack was stage-managed in an attempt to

discredit the Abovyan mayor and scuttle his reelection. The BHK leader challenged the investigators to prove the opposite.

A spokeswoman for the Investigative Committee, Naira Harutiunyan, dismissed his explanation. "There is nothing offensive about being summoned for interrogation by an investigative body," she told RFE/RL's Armenian service.

Harutiunyan said that the committee sent a second summons to Tsarukyan late on Thursday. She warned the tycoon against ignoring it as well. "We have the right to immediately detain him," she said.

Tsarukyan's party controls the second largest number of seats in Armenia's parliament. Its relations with the government have been tense of late.

Prosecutor General wants Kocharyan re-arrested, cites potential risk of obstruction of justice

Prosecutor General Artur Davtyan argues that former President Robert Kocharyan poses a potential risk of obstructing justice if the latter is not jailed during the March 1 trial.

He said the prosecution's complaints against Kocharyan's release and the suspension of court proceedings are very clear and substantiated.

"We assess that the court rulings, being ungrounded and unlawful, prove about hampering of the trial," Davtyan told reporters on June 12 amid an ongoing hearing over the prosecution's appeals. He was speaking about an earlier decision of a court that suspended the trial and sent the case to the Constitutional Court for validation.

He emphasized that Kocharyan's arrest is not anyone's desire and neither an end in itself.

"We all very clearly understand what criminal case we are dealing with. 11 years later we see that a killing is being solved," he said, referring to the recent criminal charges brought against an ex-police official suspected in killing a protester during the 2008 unrest.

"But these cases are connected. More than 1000 people were questioned over this case and there still is a necessity to question an additional 1000 or more," he said.

The Prosecutor General argues that there is a likelihood of Kocharyan obstructing justice if the latter remains in freedom.

"It is clear that the probability is high. There is a risk of illegal influence in this situation," he said.

The March 1 events colloquially refer to the 2008 post-election unrest in Yerevan, when clashes between security forces and protesters left 10 people, including two security officers dead. The unrest spanned from late February until late March. The events are



known simply as March First because it was on this day when police troops violently dispersed protesters in downtown Yerevan.

The protests were led by First President of Armenia Levon-Ter Petrosyan, who according to official results of the election lost to Serzh Sargsyan. Ter-Petrosyan's supporters believed the election was rigged.

Robert Kocharyan was the outgoing president at the time.

Incumbent PM Nikol Pashinyan was a senior member of Levon Ter-Petrosyan's political party at the time and was coordinating the protests.

Kocharyan, as well as several other ex-officials, are charged with "overthrowing constitutional order". The former president is accused in unlawful ordering the military to intervene in the 2008 unrest. He is also charged with bribery.

Kocharyan vehemently denies wrongdoing.

He was jailed for around 6 months in pre-trial detention before controversially being released in May.

House of Representatives of Netherlands adopts resolution condemning Turkish president labeling the victims of Armenian Genocide

The House of Representatives of the Netherlands adopted a resolution with predominant majority condemning the Turkish president labeling the victims of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, Vice President of the National Assembly of Armenia Alen Simonyan wrote on his facebook page.

"I am glad to learn and inform you that the House of Representatives of the Netherlands adopted a resolution with predominant majority: document condemns the Turkish President labelling the victims of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, at the same time obliging the government to inform the Turkish authorities on that stance. Special thanks to MPs representing various political forces and members of "Abovyan" Union Inge Drost and Mato Hakhverdyan for their enthusiastic work and productive efforts", ARMENPRESS reports he wrote.

On April 24, Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan sent a letter to Patriarchal Vicar of Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul Aram Atesian, who once again describing the 1.5 million Armenians who had fell victim of the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman Empire as "victims of the First World War." At one of the events, he emphasized that many were killed in that period as a result of disorders provoked by "Armenian bandits and armed groups."



Former U.S. Mayor to manage Armenia's ties with Diaspora



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on June 14 appointed the Armenian-born former mayor of Glendale, a city in Los Angeles County, as head of a newly formed government division tasked with coordinating Armenia's relations with its worldwide Diaspora.

Pashinyan created the post of "commissioner general of Diaspora affairs" after abolishing the Ministry of Diaspora as part

of a recent restructuring of the Armenian government. The first commissioner, Zareh Sinanyan, will have a 25-member staff.

Sinanyan, 43, was born in Soviet Armenia and lived there until emigrating to the United States with his family in 1988. He served as mayor of Glendale, a city with a sizable ethnic Armenian population, from 2014-2015 and 2018. Sinanyan resigned from the Glendale city council last week

ahead of his anticipated appointment to the new government position in Yerevan.

A vocal critic of Armenia's former government, Sinanyan strongly supported last year's "velvet revolution" which brought Pashinyan to power. In a May 2018 interview with RFE/RL's Armenian service, he suggested that many Diaspora Armenians will be ready to move to their ancestral homeland after the revolution.

"We must change our policy towards the Diaspora and make it more effective," Pashinyan told Sinanyan when they met later on Friday. He said his government will seek to increase the Diaspora's involvement in Armenia's economic, social and even political life.

"You are not an unknown figure in Armenia and the Diaspora, and I think that there is a good chance that we will accomplish our new tasks set in the new era," added Pashinyan.

Sinanyan spoke, for his part, of "huge potential" for the Diaspora's closer ties with Armenia as well as Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia's Movses Abelian appointed UN Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Movses Abelian of Armenia (as well as a national of Georgia), as the next Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management. He will succeed Catherine Pollard of Guyana who has been appointed as the Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance.

Mr. Abelian is currently Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management. Prior to assuming this position in 2016, he was Director of the Security Council Affairs Division in the Department of Political Affairs.

He brings to the position over 25 years of experience in conference and management affairs, coupled with experience in peace and security issues, conflict resolution, as

well as extensive expertise leading, supporting and managing complex portfolios and intergovernmental processes in the United Nations system. Mr. Abelian also has extensive experience in management, including programme planning and budget, having previously worked as Secretary of the Administrative and Budgetary Committee of the General Assembly (Fifth Committee) and the Committee on Programme and Coordination at the United Nations.

Prior to joining the United Nations, Mr. Abelian was the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Na-



tions (1998-2003) and Deputy Permanent Representative (1996-1998). Prior to joining the Foreign Service of Armenia in 1992, Mr. Abelian worked in academia as an Associate Professor at Yerevan State University.

Mr. Abelian was educated in Armenia, the Russian Federation and the United States. He is married and has two children.

Armenian minister, Mexican Ambassador discuss economic cooperation opportunities



Minister of economy Tigran Khachatryan received Ambassador of Mexico to Armenia Norma Bertha Pensado Moreno, the Armenian ministry

operation framework.

“We are interested in deepening the cooperation with Armenia in the economic sector because there is a great poten-

tial which can be used; there-

fore, I was highly interested in meeting with you”, the Ambassador said. She added that it is necessary to combine the strong sides of the two countries and find mutually beneficial cooperation directions. Mrs. Ambassador noted that they are interested in the opportunities conditioned by Armenia’s membership to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

The sides agreed that the geographical distance is one of the obstacles for the economic co-

operation between the two countries and highlighted the importance of partnership in IT sector, stating that it can open new opportunities for establishing closer economic ties.

The economy minister and the Mexican Ambassador also touched upon the tourism sector as a prospective area for cooperation.

The Ambassador informed that the Honorary Consul of Mexico will carry out activities in Armenia targeting the circle of economic cooperation.

Armenia’s FM, EU’s Mogherini highlight importance of holding dialogue on EU visa liberalization

On the sidelines of his working visit in Brussels Foreign Minister of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan on June 13 met with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini.

The Armenian FM and Federica Mogherini discussed wide range of issues relating to the Armenia-EU agenda. The sides stated that the 2nd session of the Armenia-EU Partnership Council is a good occasion to sum up and assess the works carried out so far and outline the future actions within the framework of the partnership.

FM Mnatsakanyan specifically high-



lighted the continuation of the EU’s support to the government’s reforms and development agenda. He highlighted the importance of holding dialogue on the EU visa liberalization, especially in the context of expanding the contacts between the peo-

ples.

The sides also exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues.

At the request of the High Commissioner, the Armenian FM introduced the recent developments over the settlement process of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Minister Mnatsakanyan highlighted the need to form a favorable environment for moving forward the peace process and to unconditionally maintain and strengthen the ceasefire regime. Mogherini reaffirmed EU’s support to the ongoing efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs aimed at peacefully settling the conflict.

Armenia’s economy minister, ADB representatives discuss cooperation framework dialogue on EU visa liberalization



Minister of economy Tigran Khachatryan received Shane Rosenthal, Asian Develop-

ment Bank’s Country Director for Armenia, the ministry told Noyan Tapan.

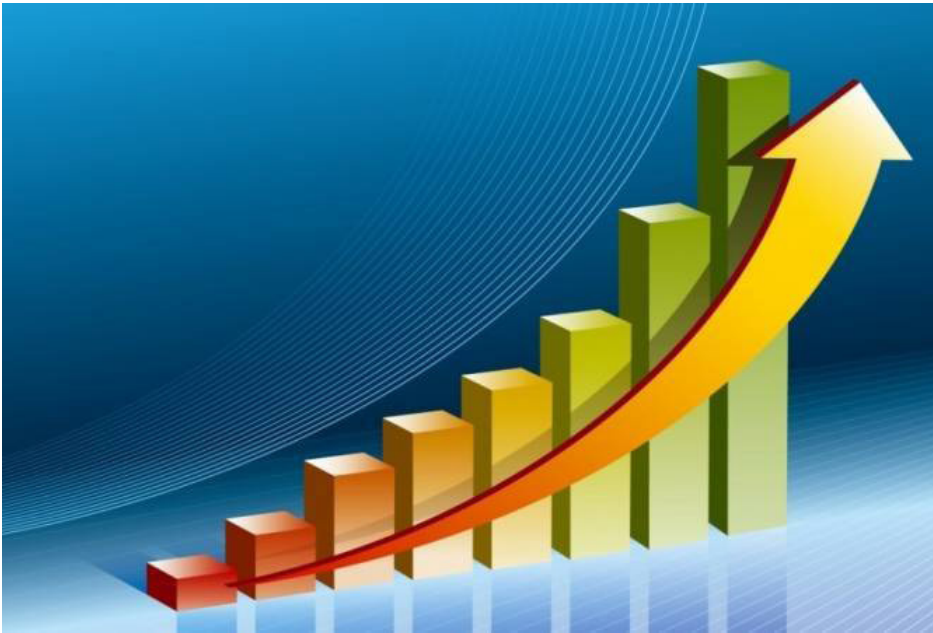
During the meeting minister Khachatryan touched upon the legislative initiative on state-private partnership adopted recently by the Armenian Parliament. The minister highlighted the importance of ADB support to the development of the legislative package and stated that the adoption of the law at the first reading is only the beginning of

an active work. The sides exchanged views on the development of adoption of respective sub-legislative acts.

The meeting also covered issues relating to the management framework of public investments, as well as the public finance management strategy.

As a new direction for cooperation the sides outlined the possibilities to implement programs in agriculture sector.

Armenia ranks 1st among EAEU member states in terms of economic growth and investments increase



The Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) has published the main social-economic indexes of the EAEU member states for the period of January-April. ARMENPRESS reports in January-March 2019 the GDP growth in EAEU member states amounted to 0.9%. The highest growth has been recorded in Armenia – 7.1%, the next

is Kirgizstan – 5.3%. In the mentioned period investments grew by 1.4% in the Union and here also Armenia has recorded the highest growth – 10.8%.

In January-April of 2019 the EAEU has recorded growth in all economic indexes with the exception of mutual trade.

In the mentioned period industrial output

amounted to 384.9 billion USD in the Union, which is an increase of 2.8% against last year. Russia's share in the total industrial output of the Union amounts to 88.5%, Kazakhstan's share is 6.4%, Belarus's share is 4.5%, while Armenia's and Kirgizstan's share is 0.3%.

EAEU's agricultural output has increased by 1.3%. Here Kazakhstan has recorded the highest growth – 3.6%. Agricultural output in Belarus has declined by 0.6%.

Construction in the Union grew by 0.7% in the mentioned period. Kirgizstan and Armenia recorded decline in this sphere – 1.6 and 10.7% respectively.

Mutual trade between EAEU member states declined by 7% in the 1st quarter of 2019 against the same period of the last year, while external trade volume remained unchanged – exports grew by 1.4% and import declined by 2.6%.

The main export product of the EAEU is ores (68.7%), while vehicles and equipment are the main imported goods (41.8%).

Armenian Airports report 11.7% increase in passenger flow in May

The two airports of the Republic of Armenia served a total of 243,016 people in May, marking a 11.7% increase as compared to the same month of 2018.

As compared to May 2018, a 13.7% increase in passenger flow was observed at Zvartnots International Airport of Yerevan in the 5th month of 2019. In May 2019 Zvartnots served 229,974 passengers against 202,289 past May.

As for Shirak Airport of Gyumri, this May it served 13,042 passengers as compared to 15,325 in May 2018, thus marking a 14.9 % decrease.

Since the beginning of the year passenger flow at the two airports of Armenia has been 1,038,617 people, which exceeds the indicator of the same period of the previous year by 8.7 %.



In January-May 2019, at Zvartnots and Shirak airports there has also been recorded an increase of 1.2 % in the number of take-

off-landings, as compared to the same period of the previous year.

EU reiterates its readiness to deepen political and economic relations with Armenia



The second Partnership Council meeting between the European Union and Armenia took place in Brussels on 13 June 2019. The Council reaffirmed the commitment of the EU and Armenia to implement effectively the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA). This ambitious agreement can play an important role for the modernization of Armenia, in particular through legislative approximation to EU norms in many sectors. The Council highlighted the paramount importance of the rule of law and respect for human rights, which includes an independent, efficient and accountable justice system.

In this context, the EU welcomed the conduct of the December 2018 Parliamentary elections in Armenia, which were held with respect for fundamental freedoms and enjoyed broad public trust. The EU and its Member States significantly contributed to the smooth organization of the elections. The EU reiterated its readiness to work closely with the democratically elected authorities to deepen political and economic relations with Armenia.

The CEPA implementation roadmap, adopted by Armenia on 1 June 2019 following consultations with civil society, was welcomed by the Council as an important tool underpinning reforms in the country. The EU and Armenia will continue working closely together to monitor progress and to ensure the successful implementation of the CEPA, including through the use of EU assistance.

The Council underlined the importance of an independent, efficient and accountable judiciary which contributes not only to the protection of human rights but also to a business environment favorable to economic development and foreign investment. The Council welcomed the current efforts aiming at comprehensive judicial reform in Armenia in accordance with the Armenian Constitution and with international standards. Following the launch of an EU-Armenia dialogue on judicial reform in September 2018 the EU stands ready to provide further support for comprehensive judicial reform based on a justice reform strategy.

The Council underlined the importance of improving the business climate to promote foreign investment, jobs growth and poverty reduction. It welcomed Armenia's intention to establish a full-fledged system for labor inspection, which can ensure due supervision and control of labor standards, rights and working conditions in line with international principles. The CEPA has significant potential to increase EU-Armenia trade flows. The start of discussions on the implementation of the CEPA provisions on the protection of geographical indications, including the relevant EU

financial and technical assistance, is a positive step.

The Council reviewed cooperation on energy, transport, environment and climate change, including Armenia's participation in the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environmental Partnership (E5P), the extension of the indicative core TEN-T network to Armenia in February 2019 and cooperation under the EU-funded regional project EU4Climate. In this context, the EU will provide support for the priority infrastructure projects communicated by Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, during their meeting in Brussels in March 2019. The Council also welcomed the launch of a dialogue on education reform in March 2019. To improve the mobility of citizens and people-to-people contacts, the EU and Armenia will continue promoting the mobility of citizens through the Visa-facilitation and the Readmission Agreements and consider in due course the opening of a Visa-liberalization Dialogue, provided that conditions for well-managed and secure mobility are in place.

The Council recalled that the EU had earmarked more than €160 million in assistance for Armenia for 2017-2020. In recognition of Armenia's determination to pursue a reform agenda and to implement the CEPA effectively, the EU will allocate an additional €25 million in the context of its 2019 Annual Action Plan of assistance for Armenia. The Council stressed the need to make the best use of these resources to maximize the impact of reforms and to improve the living conditions of the citizens in a visible and tangible manner.

Following the Eastern Partnership 10th anniversary celebrations in May, the Council stressed the importance of continued work towards attaining the Eastern Partnership 2020 deliverables particularly in the field of rule of law, governance and the fight against corruption. It looked forward to the discussions on the future of the Eastern Partnership post-2020 under the structured consultation process launched by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker.

Finally, the Council discussed regional and international issues. The EU reiterated its support to the OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs' efforts aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The EU stands ready to support initiatives aimed at overcoming the conflict divide and preparing populations for peace. On Syria, the Council gave its strong backing to the work of the UN Special Envoy for the resumption of the intra-Syrian talks in Geneva. Armenia confirmed its intention to continue providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Syria on the ground and work closely with all stakeholders for improving life conditions of persons who moved to Armenia from Syria. The EU confirmed that it will continue to assist Syrian people inside and outside Syria. On Iran, both the EU and Armenia remained committed to the continued full and effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). On Turkey, the EU reiterated its support for the normalization of Armenia-Turkey relations and stressed the need for both sides to engage in this process without preconditions. Armenia reiterated its long-standing position on establishing diplomatic relations with Turkey without preconditions.

The Council was chaired by the Foreign Minister of Armenia, Zohrab Mnatsakanyan. The European Union was represented by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini.

Armenian Bar Association Turns 30, Marks Anniversary with Flair and Education

Gracing the 30th anniversary of its establishment, the Armenian Bar Association will convene a fascinating annual conference and celebrate its red-letter day in dramatic fashion on June 28-29, 2019, in downtown Los Angeles. The conference program and the ensuing evening ball are expected to draw record numbers from the legal community and from the public at large. All functions are open to the public, with free admission for non-lawyers to the continuing legal education program and tickets-for-purchase for the gala banquet.

Appearing at the top of the marquis will be Judge Dickran Tevrizian, Jr. (retired)



Judge Dickran Tevrizian, Jr.

whom the Armenian Bar will honor with its Lifetime Achievement Award at the gala banquet to be held at the stately and super-impressive California Club. In the words of Armenian Bar Chairman Gerard Kassabian, "Rare are the lives of men who have done so much for so many in the legal profession. What Judge T. has shown us over the years is just how right it is to be proud and expressive of our Armenian heritage on a broad, multi-cultural platform here in Los Angeles and throughout the country. Please join us as we raise our glasses and fill our hearts in humble tribute to the historic career of one of our iconic founding members."

Judge Tevrizian was the first Armenian-American to be appointed to the federal bench, a position he held with an abundance of dignity and decorum for more than 30 years. A worthy recipient of numerous awards and recognized as a "shining star, great judge, kind human being, and 13 or 14 on a scale of 10," Judge Tevrizian is widely respected for faithfully following the law and steering feuding parties towards informal resolution as opposed to contentious litigation. Since his retirement from the bench, Judge Tevrizian has become one of the prized neutrals at JAMS and was re-

cently selected to the 2019 Southern California Super Lawyers list in the alternative dispute resolution category.

The annual conference program at the Sheraton Grand Los Angeles will open with a Saturday morning wake-up call about the plunder of historic Armenia's native culture and civilization and then will touch upon the legal challenges and opportunities in restoring dimensions of it. Moderated by Armenian Genocide Reparations Committee Chairman Armen K. Hovannisian, two renowned experts in the field will weigh in with their practical, hands-on experiences on the ground itself of the Armenian homeland and in U.S. and international tribunals.

The first discussant will be trail-blazing and thought-provoking Matthew Karanian, Esq. who will display a mesmerizing, virtual journey entitled, *The Armenian Highland, From Riches to Ruins to Rehabilitation*. The second panelist, Thaddeus



Matthew Karanian, Esq.

Stauber of Nixon Peabody LLP, comes to the Armenian Bar as that type of rare treasure who will talk candidly about the hitches



Honorable Arman Tatoyan

and hurdles in efforts to reclaim vestiges of cultural heritage through the court and arbitral systems. His presentation is entitled, *The Road to Recovery is A Winding Path*. Mr. Stauber advises the world's leading cultural institutions, foreign sovereigns,



Honorable Artak Beglaryan

international art collectors, dealers, artists, universities, foundations, estates and individuals.

The afternoon panel discussion will be—in itself—a prodigious and historic event. In an unprecedented presentation in the Diaspora, the Human Rights Ombudsmen of the Republic of Armenia (Honorable Arman Tatoyan) and the Republic of Artsakh (Honorable Artak Beglaryan) will take the stage side-by-side to share their views, respond to questions about the protection and restoration of human rights, and chart new lines of cooperation with the Diaspora.

Bringing this truly unique arrangement into perspective, Garo B. Ghazarian, Co-Chairman of the Armenian Rights Watch Committee and the panel's moderator, commented that "the rights of women and men, of friend and foe, of Armenians and non-Armenians settled long ago at the base of our organization's code and credo. We carry an extensive legacy of reciprocal reinforcements with the homeland and as the guardians of the personal and collective rights of our communities in the diaspora. And now we are thrilled to have the personifications themselves of the primacy of human rights, the right honorable Ombudsmen of the Republics of Armenia and Artsakh."

For further program and weekend details, please visit www.armenianbar.org



Thaddeus Stauber, Esq.

CoE greatly appreciates Armenian PM's firm commitment to pursue judicial reform agenda: Jagland's letter to Pashinyan

Secretary General of the Council of Europe Thorbjørn Jagland has sent a letter to Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, stating that the CoE highly appreciates the Armenian PM's commitment to be consistent with the agenda of judicial reforms.

Armenpress presents the text of the letter:

"Dear Prime Minister, I should like to thank you and your Government for the warm welcome received by the Council of Europe delegation who visited Armenia on 30 and 31 May and for the very construction discussions you had with them.

The Council of Europe greatly appreciates your firm commitment to pursue the judicial reform agenda. We also share your assessment of the need to increase efforts against corruption and to reform and re-



build trust in the judiciary in line with the Armenian Constitution and Armenia's international commitments.

A comprehensive and far-reaching judicial reform strategy, implemented with speed and determination, would appropriately address your Government's legitimate aims. This strategy could be based on three key pillars: enhanced efforts against corruption, improved independence and

efficiency of the judicial system, and adequate redress of human rights violations. It could be guided by the findings of the relevant Council of Europe institutions and monitoring mechanism and in particular by the European Court of Human Rights, the Venice Commission and the GRECO. Such a strategy would ensure the credibility and predictability of the reform and continuous international support.

The Council of Europe is ready to participate actively in these reform efforts within the framework of the Action Plan which will be launched in Yerevan in a few days, with the participation of the Deputy Secretary General.

We look forward to our continued cooperation".

PM Pashinyan receives AUA and AGBU co-founded research group members



Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan received members of the research group entrusted with the study of Armenia's technological development opportunities, co-founded by the American University of Armenia (AUA) and the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU). Noyan Tapan was informed from the Office of the Prime Minister of Armenia.

The meeting was attended by Minister of High-Tech Industry of Armenia Hakob

Arshakyan, incumbent AUA President Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian, AUA President-elect Karin Markides, AUA Board of Trustees Chair Lawrence Pitts, AGBU Armenia Office Head Vazgen Yacoubian, Synopsys Armenia President Yervand Zorian, Armenian Technology Research Program Executive Director Arthur Khalatyan and others.

Highly appreciative of the activities carried out by the research group, the Premier noted that the development of a technology-based economy is one of his government's top priorities. Nikol Pashinyan stressed the need for training programs for high-quality personnel in the field of high technologies, noting that the Executive focuses on the promotion of smart educational systems. The Head of Government said comprehensive reforms should be

implemented to this end. Nikol Pashinyan thanked those involved in research activities for supporting our country's technological development.

Experts from authoritative international educational institutions presented their findings on Armenia's educational, economic and technological sectors. They specifically dwelt on the ways of enhancing Armenian companies' competitiveness, networking education and business, boosting the role of secondary education in matters related to vocational orientation and promoting digital learning facilities.

During the meeting, views were exchanged on the possibilities and the steps to take for catalyzing Armenia's technological progress.

New solar power plant to be built in Armenia's Gladzor



The groundbreaking ceremony of a solar power plant in Armenia's Gladzor will take place on June 18. The plant will be built within the framework of the "Enhancing SME Competitiveness through Promotion and Wider Use of Sustainable Innovative Technologies" project.

The project funded by the European Union aims to foster employment by improving competitiveness of SMEs in tourism sector in Vayots Dzor region. This will be achieved through the promotion of environmentally and financially sustainable practices, particularly, eco-tourism combined with the adoption of renewable energy sources and efficient energy practices.

The event is one of many EU initiatives on energy efficiency within EU Sustainable Energy Week in 2019 that will feature Sustainable Energy Days in Armenia through youth events, intellectual quests, painting competitions, seminars and lectures, inaugurations of solar photovoltaic power plants, biogas plant launch, sustainable greenhouse opening, and many more exciting events.

Piotr Switalski, Ambassador, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Armenia, Vache Terteryan, Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia, Trdat Sargsyan, Governor of Vayots Dzor

region, Vardan Avagyan, Deputy Mayor of Yeghegnadzor, Enrico Banchelli, Project Manager will make opening remarks and keynote speeches.

Armenia sprinting ahead towards Sustainable Energy with European Union

Armenia is moving forward on its sustainable energy pathway, with strong support from the European Union. The European Commission and International Financing Institutions aim at bringing energy efficiency reforms and investments to scale by actively collaborating with the Government and relevant stakeholders of selected countries, and gathered in Yerevan on 18 March 2019 in High Level Energy Efficiency Initiative in Armenia.

Energy efficiency is one of the most effective tools to support an economy, while contributing to the global fight for climate change. On a national scale, energy efficiency helps strengthening energy security, reducing energy expenditures and freeing up funds for expenditures in other sectors, slowing down energy demand growth, eliminating the needs for investments in new generation capacities, creating green jobs, enhancing satisfaction with the public services' quality, helping meet the climate mitigation goals and improving the competitiveness of the economy. On a building

scale, energy efficiency improves the utility affordability, extends building lifetime, and boosts indoor comfort.

In particular, a gap analysis was performed aiming to assess the progress made by the Government of Armenia in creating favorable market conditions for energy efficiency, as well as identify the obstacles related to energy efficiency improvement in Armenia and recommend actions to address existing shortcomings, with key focus being addressed towards the buildings sector.

The High-level EE dialogue summed up the achievements over the past years and discussed ways to support energy efficiency initiatives in Armenia further scaling up energy efficiency investments in both public and multi-apartment residential buildings.

23 Armenian towns have joined the Covenant of Mayors, and ten of them with approved Sustainable Energy Action Plans.

Many of the ongoing EU initiatives on energy/energy efficiency sector, including a couple of Pilot Regional Development Programme EU-granted projects in Vayots Dzor/Syunik/Gegharkunik regions, and partner-supported initiatives have featured energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions throughout Armenia. EU Sustainable Energy Week in 2019 will feature Sustainable Energy Days in Yerevan, Abovyan, Gavar, Artik, Aparan, Martuni, Ijevan, Goris, Masis, Tashir, Spitak and Vayq featuring youth events, intellectual quests, painting competitions, seminars and lectures, inaugurations of solar photovoltaic power plants in Gladzor and Spitak, biogas plant launch, sustainable greenhouse opening, and many more exciting events which will spread the buzz of the sustainable energy from June 15 to July 4 across the map of Armenia.

Three Armenian manuscripts from Italy go on display at Matenadaran



An exhibition titled “Three Armenian manuscripts from Toscana” opened at Matenadaran Institute on June 10.

Three of the 14 Armenian manuscripts kept at the Laurentian Library in Florence will be on display until the end of the year. An interactive multimedia system will display digital pages of the manuscripts.

Attending the opening ceremony were Armenia’s President Armen Sarkissian, President of the Italian National Research Council Massimo Inguscio, Director of Research Innovation & Technology at IBM Italia Fabrizio Renzi, Italy’s Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Armenia Vincenzo del Monaco.

Matenadaran’s Director Vahan Ter-Ghevondyan said the exhibition is ex-



ceptional, as this is the first time Matenadaran hosts Armenian gems kept in friendly Italy.

Massimo Inguscio noted that the exhibition is a result of the reciprocal visits of the



Presidents of Armenia and Italy and their commitment to develop bilateral cultural ties.

“We have come here from the Summit of Minds, where we spoke about the power of artificial intelligence,” he said, adding that

“this small exhibition shows the depth of natural intelligence.

President Armen Sarkissian said, in turn, that the three manuscripts that have been kept outside Armenia for centuries have now returned home.

“These ancient manuscripts testify to the friendly relations established between Armenia and Italy,” the President added.

Expressing gratitude to Ambassador Vincenzo del Monaco for his efforts in organizing the exhibition, President Sarkissian voiced hope that similar events would follow.

“I’m proud to be here and open this exhibition. I hope the next one will be held soon, no matter where – in Yerevan or Roma, since we are tied not only historically, but also technologically,” the President stated.

Armen Sarkissian emphasized the role of science and technology in making culture and art more accessible to the public. He noted that science, technologies, culture and art are becoming promising direction of Armenian-Italian cooperation.

Armenia, Mexico to cooperate in education, science, culture and sport fields

Minister of education, science, culture and sport Arayik Harutyunyan received Ambassador of Mexico Norma Bertha Pensado Moreno, the ministry told Noyan Tapan.

The meeting touched upon the cooperation prospects between the two countries in the fields of education, science, culture and sport, because according to both the minister and the Ambassador, Armenia and Mexico have a huge potential in this regard.

“We understand that in order to have a democratic and developed society the achievements in education, science and



culture are very important. Taking into consideration the two peoples’ history and presence of the respective will there are broad opportunities for effective coopera-

tion in these areas”, minister Harutyunyan said.

“Our countries have a millennia-old history, we have many commonalities, and one of our goals is to strengthen and develop the ties in educational and cultural sectors”, the Ambassador of Mexico said.

At the meeting the sides also discussed issues relating to the ongoing and upcoming programs in IT, sport and scientific-educational areas, as well as the preparations for signing joint memorandums of Armenian-Italian cooperation.

News from Armenia's leading telecom operator

16th Golden Apricot Yerevan IFF kicks off in Yerevan



This summer Armenia's cultural life will be marked by an expected and prominent event. Golden Apricot 16th International Film Festival is to start on July 7th.

Today the representatives of the Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival, the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport and Festival's General Partner VivaCell-MTS announced the start of the film festival that is very popular both in Armenia and abroad.

During the joint press conference, the organizers of the event presented to the journalists the official poster of the film festival, as well as discussed the upcoming events.

"This year the festival has undergone some changes since the festival's staff has been changed. The staff of the festival has been filled by young people who prepare for the 16th Golden Apricot with great responsibility and do everything to make it a true feast. The changes were also made in the government, as the union of ministries took place, and from now on we will cooperate with the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. Our general

partner VivaCell-MTS has not changed. The company is one of the devotees of art, particularly cinema and the Golden Apricot, for which we are very happy and grateful," Founding President of the Golden Apricot Yerevan IFF **Harutyun Khachatryan** noted.

"The activation and development of the cultural life, especially national cinematography is of great importance to VivaCell-MTS. Over the years, our company has been supporting filmmakers within the framework of the Golden Apricot Film Festival. Along with being an important stimulus for cinematography, the film festival is making a great work to make Armenia a recognizable country with its rich culture," VivaCell-MTS Founding General Manager **Ralph C. Yirikian** said.

This year the IFF has received over 740 films from different countries and has selected a number of films from prestigious international film festivals such as the festivals in Cannes, Berlin, Rotterdam, for the program. The festival will have feature

films (including fiction and documentary films), as well as short regional film contests; the non-competition program will feature a regional panorama contest. The rest of the programs such as Yerevan Premieres, Retrospectives, and Tribute are non-competitive.



The "Golden Apricot" IFF has a new logo, which reflects the unique approach of the new festival team to the 16th anniversary. The logo is minimalistic, it represents the Armenian letter "Է" ("Ts") and through that letter the designer tried to present the apricot, which is the symbol of the festival.

The Development of the Infrastructures of the Communities as a Strategy



VivaCell-MTS and the Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC) are continuing the responsible partnership for addressing the important problems in remote regions. Within the framework of the ecovillages' network development project in Armenia, another problem has been solved. The

illuminated. In the second phase of the project, another 42 LED lamps have been installed, doubling the lighted area. In general, as a result of two-years' project, a significant part of the streets of the Zaritap village were illuminated, covering about 3,000 meters long area. 83 LED lamps are mounted.

VivaCell-MTS Founding General Manager **Ralph C. Yirikian**, the founder of FPWC **Ruben Khachatryan**, Zaritap community head **Simon Babayan**, and community members participated in the launching ceremony of the energy-saving system.

"We always paid importance to projects, which have a lasting impact. Especially when it comes to borderland villages, where there is need for such projects. It seems this project solves just an issue of outdoor illumination, but there is more to that: the real impact is seen now and will be seen years after. This

have spoken many times. I am happy to see yet another village with new system of illumination succeeds," VivaCell-MTS Founding General Manager Ralph Yirikian said.

The partners consider the targeted devel-



opment of the infrastructure in Armenia's regions, the application of the newest technologies in nature protection, as extremely important. It contributes not only to the protection of environment, but also increases the efficiency of energy saving and supports the community development.

Unlike other lamps, the LED lamps are more efficient and durable, and can be used longer, consuming 80% less electric energy.

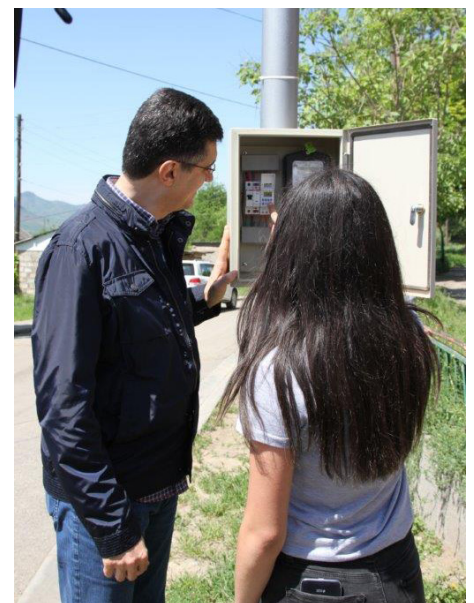
The streets of Zaritap will be illuminated in the summer from 21:00 to 01:00, and in the winter from 18:00 to 23:00. On holidays the lighting will be provided, all night long.



village of Zaritap, Zaritap community of Vayots Dzor region, has been equipped with an outdoor lighting energy-saving system. The project was implemented in two stages.

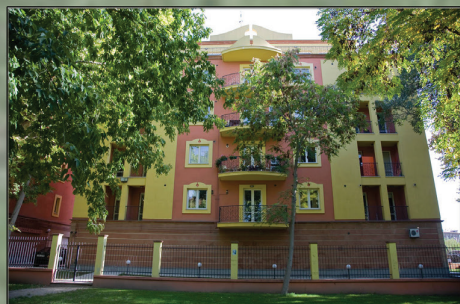
In 2017, with the cooperation of the parties, an external lighting system with 41 LED lamps has been installed. As a result, an area extending through 1,500 meters was

is a chance to manage the modest budget of the community with more efficiency: the means saved as a result of using energy-saving system will be used for other purposes. Let alone the environmental uses, the perspectives of enlivening community life and psychological support the project will bring to the community, of which we



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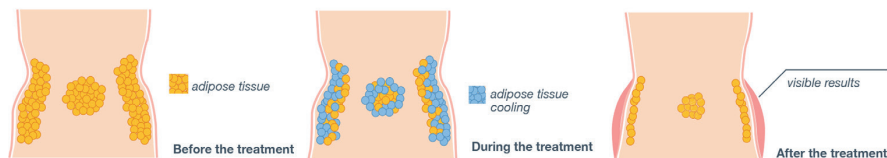
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The publisher: NT Holding LTD
Լրատվական գործունեություն իրականացնող՝
ՆՏ Հոլդինգ ՍՊԸ

Ծավալը՝ 2.25 մամուլ, տպաքանակը՝ 1500
Circulation: 1500 print copies and
15600 copies by e-mail list in PDF format

Weekly Newspaper, Since May 4, 1993

President of the NT Media Holding:
TIGRAN HARUTYUNYAN
Editor-in-Chief of the Media Holding:
GAYANEH ARAKELYAN
Director of the weekly:
MARINA HARUTYUNYAN
Chief Correspondent: **GOURGEN KHAZHAKIAN**
Proofreader: **SUSANNA MKRTCHIAN**

Համարի թող. պատ.՝ Մ. Հարությունյան

ISSN 1829-0604

Գրանցման վկայականի համարը՝
03U898368, տրված՝ 11.01.2013թ.
Registration certificate and the date:
273.110.00512, 15.12.1995

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