

French National Assembly adopts resolution supporting Armenia and calling for sanctions against Azerbaijan



France– The French National Assembly, Paris

The French National Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution supporting Armenia and calling for sanctions against Azerbaijan.

With the resolution, the National Assembly condemns, in the strongest terms, the military aggression of Azerbaijan on September 13 and 14 against the southern and southeastern regions of the Republic of Armenia, in violation of its sovereignty.

The National Assembly calls for an end to the military occupation by Azerbaijan of the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia and for the immediate and uncon-

ditional withdrawal of Azerbaijani forces. It urges strict compliance with the terms of the trilateral statements of November 9, 2020 and January 11, 2021.

The lawmakers invite the Government to work within the United Nations Organization with a view to deploying an international force capable of ensuring the end of hostilities in the South Caucasus and the safety of civilian populations and emphasizes the importance of the role of the Security Council to endorse an agreement of the parties concerned on the deployment of such a force.

The lower house of the Parliament calls on the Government, in consultation with the European Union and the United States, to take any diplomatic initiative likely to promote the development of a lasting peace treaty between the Republic of Armenia and Azerbaijan. It also calls on the Government to intensify efforts at the level of the European Union in order to adopt a common position aimed at promoting the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia.

In this regard, the lawmakers welcome the  page 3

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Nikol Pashinyan, Philip Reeker discuss formation of mechanisms for discussions between Stepanakert and Baku



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received the US Co-chair of the OSCE

Minsk Group, Senior Advisor for Caucasus negotiations Philip Reeker.

The Prime Minister welcomed his visit to the region and highly appreciated the role of the US as an OSCE Minsk Group co-chairing country.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to the Nagorno Karabakh issue, including the formation of an international mechanism for discussions between Stepanakert and Baku.

The sides exchanged thoughts on the normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, regional stability and other security issues.

The interlocutors also touched on issues related to cooperation within the framework of the Armenian-American strategic dialogue. The continuous support of the USA in the effective implementation of democratic reforms in Armenia was highlighted.

Azerbaijan's maximalist aspirations the only obstacle to security, Armenian FM tells OSCE Secretary General



Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan met with OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid on the sidelines of the 29th OSCE Ministerial Council in Poland.

Minister Mirzoyan briefed the interlocutor on the fragile security situation in the region, pointing out that Azerbaijan's continuous aggressions and belligerent rhetoric grossly violate the fundamental provisions of international humanitarian law, the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

Ararat Mirzoyan emphasized the readiness of the Armenian side to advance the peace agenda, noting that the main obstacle to establishing security in the region is Azerbaijan's maximalist position and its

aspirations to solve problems through the use of force or the threat of force.

The Armenian Foreign Minister presented to the interlocutor the approaches of the Armenian side regarding the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan relations and the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh problem.

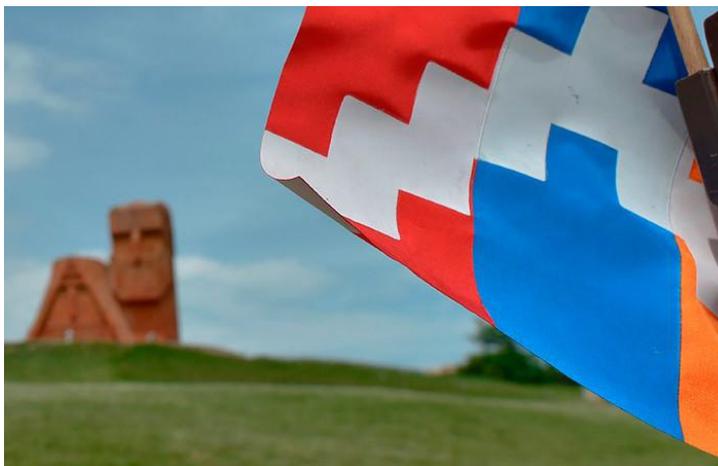
Reference was made to the activities of the OSCE needs assessment mission.

Cooperation programs with Armenia within the framework of the OSCE were also on the agenda of the meeting.

Status of Artsakh cannot be linked to the settlement of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan – MFA

The settlement of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the solution of the border issue between the two countries, cannot and should not be tied to the status of the Artsakh Republic, Artsakh's Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The comments come in response to various discussions and opinions regarding the status of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic that have intensified again, "which is an objective process, taking into account the key nature of this issue in the Azerbaijani-Karabakh conflict settlement process."



"Official Stepanakert welcomes any steps aimed at peaceful and comprehensive settlement of the Azerbaijani-Karabakh conflict, as well as settling the relations

between Armenia and Azerbaijan. At the same time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh is authorized to state that the official stance of the people and the authorities of Artsakh remains unchangeable," the Ministry said, reiterating that "Artsakh will not be a part of Azerbaijan."

"The territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan has no relation to the Nagorno Karabakh Republic and its status, which has been determined by the people of our country in full and strict compliance with the norms and principles of international law and the then acting Soviet legislation," the Foreign Ministry said.

page 1 ➔ establishment of a European Union civilian mission aimed at restoring confidence, stabilizing the situation on the ground and contributing to the work of the boundary commissions of the Republic of Armenia and Azerbaijan. They also comment the deployment of an assessment mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to Armenia, at the request of the government in Yerevan.

The National Assembly calls for due respect for the territorial sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Armenia and urges an immediate and unconditional release and repatriation of all Armenian prisoners of war.

It calls on the Government to mobilize so that an international and independent investigation can be conducted into the abuses allegedly committed by the Azerbaijani armed forces against Armenian soldiers and civilians. Invites, for this purpose, the Republic of Armenia to join the International Criminal Court in order to fight against impunity.



France - French Foreign and European Affairs Minister Catherine Colonna

Members of the Assembly invite the Government to consider the imposition of economic sanctions, should the attacks and occupation of the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia continue.

It invites stakeholders, the Minsk Group, the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to do their utmost to preserve, in a sustainable way, the Armenian cultural and religious heritage in the areas under Azerbaijani control;

Invites the Government to increase France's support for the Republic of Armenia, particularly with regard to humanitarian aid, and to study the strengthening of

its defense capacities;

Finally, the National Assembly emphasizes its unwavering commitment to the search for lasting peace, which alone will ensure security and stability in the South Caucasus.

The French Senate adopted a similar resolution on November 15.

France's government has distanced itself from French parliamentary resolutions accusing Azerbaijan of military aggression against Armenia and urging Paris to consider imposing sanctions on Baku.

The French Foreign Ministry was quick to make clear that "this parliamentary initiative does not represent an official government position." It said Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna expressed that position on Tuesday when she urged Armenia and Azerbaijan to make progress in ongoing peace talks.

"It was in this spirit that President Macron met with the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents in Prague [on October 6,]" the ministry added in written comments to the press.

The USA is involved and supports direct Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiations at the highest level. Philip Reeker

Philip Reeker, Senior Advisor on Caucasus Negotiations, made a video message in Yerevan, stating that this is his second visit to Armenia after taking office. In the video message Reeker said that he continues to be impressed by Armenia's commitment to common democratic values despite the challenges the country is facing.

"This commitment represents the future of Armenia and the entire South Caucasus. I am grateful for the important and productive meetings I had with the government members, particularly Prime Minister Pashinyan, Foreign Minister Mirzoyan, as well as civil society representatives and other stakeholders here



in Yerevan. I had similar meetings at the beginning of the week in Baku, as well as in Tbilisi. The United States is involved in and supports direct Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiations at the highest level, represented by Secretary of State Antony

Blinken and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan. We are committed to ensuring a peaceful future in the South Caucasus region," he says.

The diplomat believes continuous direct dialogue, that is, not military action, but diplomacy, is key to resolving problems and achieving lasting peace.

"We all realize that this is not easy, but I want to repeat the observation of State Secretary Blinken during the meeting with Foreign Ministers Mirzoyan and Bayramov. he said, "The United States is committed to doing everything possible to support your efforts to establish lasting peace," concludes Philip Reeker.

Armenia, Hungary agree to restore diplomatic relations



On the 1st of December 2022 Ararat Mirzoyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary held a meeting on the margins of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Łódź.

Both sides agreed that there are deep

historical and cultural ties, as well as shared Christian heritage between the Armenian and Hungarian nations and highlighted the importance of improving the relations between the Republic of Armenia and Hungary. They also underlined the role of the Armenian community in Hungary, as an officially recognized national minority, which is one of the bridges between the two nations.

The Ministers exchanged views about the current stage of relations between Armenia and Hungary. They agreed to restore full diplomatic relations, expressing their intention to open a new chapter in their relations based on mutual trust and respect towards international law.

As a follow-up to the meeting, the two

Governments will appoint non-resident Ambassadors to explore the possibilities of the development of their relations – especially in the fields of trade, culture, education, and tourism. The necessary diplomatic and administrative procedures will begin in the coming days.

Armenia severed diplomatic ties with Hungary in August 2012 after the release of an Azerbaijani army officer convicted of murdering an Armenian soldier.

The Azerbaijani serviceman, Ramil Safarov, was given a life sentence for hacking Armenian Gurgen Markarian to death with an axe in 2004 in Budapest.

Safarov was eventually flown to Baku and pardoned, despite Baku's assurances that his sentence would be enforced.

Turkish-Armenian border meeting confirmed



The Armenian Foreign Ministry has confirmed that the Armenian and Turkish technical delegations met at the border in early November.

“Technical issues pertaining to the implementation of the agreements were

discussed at the meeting. The discussions will continue,” Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Vahan Hunanyan told *Armenpress*.

The comments come in response to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's spokesperson Ibrahim Kalin's statement that in early November technical delegations of the Armenian and Turkish governments met at the border.

“They discussed work that will be done during the opening of the border, issues related to repairing a [border] bridge, border controls and checkpoints,” Kalin told Turkish television.

Hunanyan said Armenia's Special Rep-

resentative for Normalization with Turkey Ruben Rubinyan had announced about the meeting mentioned by Kalin in early November.

The Spokesman added that agencies in charge of implementing the agreements reached on July 1 by the Armenian and Turkish special envoys were also involved in the meeting from the Armenian side.

Turkey and Armenia have reached agreements to open the border to citizens of third countries and to allow mutual cargo shipments by air during four rounds of negotiations held in the first half of this year

Rubinyan explains reason behind refusing to vote for opposition's parliamentary statement

Vice Speaker of Parliament Ruben Rubinyan explained why the ruling Civil Contract party refused to vote in favor of adopting the opposition's parliamentary statement.

The opposition Hayastan faction drafted a parliamentary statement in response to the November 8 statement of the Azerbaijani parliament.

Rubinyan presented the principled points of the Armenian foreign policy and said that the Hayastan faction's statement is contradicting these points. “We consider that the Republic of Armenia has internationally recognized borders, has an internationally recognized territory – a part of which is occupied by Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani troops must immediately and unconditionally withdraw. We also con-

sider that the issue of the rights and security of the people of Artsakh must get a solution, otherwise it would mean an exodus of Armenians from Artsakh or a genocide of the people of Artsakh. And thirdly, we consider that this issue could get a solution through direct Baku-Stepanakert talks with participation of an international mechanism. And the reason for us not agreeing with certain points of the statement drafted by Hayastan faction is that by adopting the statement we would contradict the three points I mentioned. I believe that you wouldn't find these three points to be treasonous,” Rubinyan said.

Rubinyan cited PM Nikol Pashinyan's speech which made a political change, that is, the rights and security of the people of Artsakh must not stem from the status of

Artsakh, on the contrary, the imperative of ensuring the rights and security of the people of Artsakh is the priority from which the possible status must stem. “This is another reason that we have problems with certain points,” Rubinyan said.

Civil Contract lawmakers did not participate in the voting and the opposition's statement was not adopted.



US Ambassador-designate pledges to support a peaceful future for Armenia

The peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is essential to a more secure and prosperous future for Armenia and for the South Caucasus, US Ambassador-designate to Armenia Kristina Kvien.

“The United States is working through bilateral and multilateral channels to help the sides achieve a peaceful, lasting, negotiated settlement of the conflict based on the principles of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. If confirmed, I will support the Administration’s commitment to achieving this goal,” she said.



“I grew up in Fresno, California, home to one of the largest Armenian Diaspora communities in the United States. My teachers and friends of Armenian heritage spoke of the Ottoman-era genocide that

forced many of their families to seek new homes in America. As President Biden said on Armenian Remembrance Day this year, “let us redouble our efforts toward healing and building the better, more peaceful world that we wish for our children.” I confirmed, I will do everything in my power to remember the victims of the Armenian Genocide and support a peaceful future for Armenia,” the Ambassador-designate said.

“To this end I will do everything towards normalization discussions between Armenia and Turkey, which have made some steps forward,” she said.

US committed to helping bring a peaceful future for the South Caucasus – Ned Price

The United States has been very much engaged with the parties to help bring about a peaceful future for the South Caucasus region, Spokesperson for the US Department of State Ned Price said at a daily briefing.

He declined to answer whether the issue was touched upon during talks in Washington between US President Joe Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron.

“Secretary Blinken has now convened

two trilateral meetings between Armenia and Azerbaijan. He’s continued to be in telephonic communication with the parties as well,” Price said.

“When they were last together, the foreign ministers agreed to expedite their negotiations, to organize another meeting in the coming weeks. They both expressed their appreciation to the U.S. side for hosting that ministerial. We certainly hope that the dialogue and constructive atmosphere between the two countries will continue as



we continue to support the diplomacy to lead to – lead to a lasting peace and resolving issues between the two countries,” the Spokesperson said.

MEP proposes that EU should abandon the gas deal as a primary measure to deter Azerbaijan



MEP Lars Patrick Berg is convinced that the Azerbaijani authorities will accept international norms only if they are forced to do so. In this regard, he considers it a primary step for the EU to abandon the gas deal with Azerbaijan, the MEP told ARMENPRESS, referring to another provocation by Azerbaijan, the incident of closing the only highway connecting Artsakh to

Armenia.

“These constant provocations must stop immediately. I call upon the European institutions and the international community to express their deepest concerns about this recent incident which is harmful to all the ongoing peace and reconciliation efforts”, the MEP said.

The MEP emphasized that now is the time to de-escalate the tension. According to him, they have to accept that the authorities of Azerbaijan will accept international norms only if they are forced to do so. “Perhaps, our first step is to abandon the gas deal,” emphasized Lars Patrick Berg. “Perhaps our first move is to repudiate the gas deal”, Lars Patrick Berg emphasized.

On December 3, it became known that a group of Azerbaijanis in civilian clothes

closed the Stepanakert-Goris highway with environmental pretext at the intersection of Shushi-Karintak. Artsakh’s information headquarters reported that it is obvious that with this, Azerbaijan is resorting to provocation in order to interrupt the land connection between Armenia and Artsakh and subject the civilian population to psychological terror.

The command staff of the Russian peacekeeping troops stationed in Artsakh were negotiating with the Azerbaijani side on opening the Stepanakert-Goris highway.

The negotiations with the Azerbaijani side, which lasted more than three hours, gave a positive result. The only highway connecting Artsakh to Armenia is bi-directionally open for all types of vehicles.

Two-day conference on strengthening ties between EEU and China launched in Armenia



The 4th Eurasian Research on Modern China and Eurasia two-day conference is being held in Yerevan organized by the China-Eurasia Council for Political and Strategic Research with support from the Chinese embassy in Yerevan.



The Ambassador of China to Armenia Fan Yong said in his remarks that holding the conference is a major achievement. The forum is focused on many important issues, such as the relations between China and Eurasian countries and its importance.

“China plays a big role in implementing reforms in international systems. We are ready to do whatever depends on us to



build the best future for humanity,” the ambassador said, noting that the conference contributes to creating new ideas and solutions. “This is a good opportunity both for strengthening the relations between China and Armenia and discussing various issues around the relations between China and the Eurasian Economic Union.”

China-Eurasia Council for Political and Strategic Research Director Mher Sahakyan said in his speech that the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and China signed an agreement in 2018 which allows EEU countries to strengthen political and eco-

nomtic ties with China.

Eurasian Economic Commission Director for Integration Development Gohar Barseghyan said that both the EEU and China have a big geopolitical role today.



Armenian wines presented in German cities



On November 24, 25, 26, the German Development Agency (GIZ) together with the Vine and Wine Foundation of Armenia, Wines of Armenia GmbH and the German Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church, organized “Wine culture in Arme-

nia. From Noah to Date” series of events in Stuttgart, Cologne and Berlin.

The aim of the events was to present the rich culture of Armenian winemaking, the current revival and the programs implemented in the field of winemaking to the Armenian community in Germany, particularly the online platform of the [Wines of Armenia](#) and the common warehouse of Armenian wines in EU.

During the events, Armenian winemaking and culture were introduced through a presentation and a short video, followed by musical performances, and wine tasting and sale.

The event was attended by Victor

Yengibaryan, Armenia’s Ambassador to Germany, Vardan Urutyan, Rector of the National Agrarian University of Armenia, representatives of the Armenian Ministry of Economy, representatives of the Armenian and German religious and business communities.



Activity report 2022 of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure presented to the Prime Minister

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan visited the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure to discuss the ministry's activity report 2022, the Office of the Prime Minister informs.

Deputy Prime Ministers Mher Grigoryan and Hambardzum Matevosyan, Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister Arayik Harutyunyan, Head of the State Supervision Service Romanos Petrosyan, officials of the Prime Minister's Office, the leadership of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, and other officials participated in the consultation.

Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Gnel Sanosyan, deputy ministers, head of the Migration Service presented the programs and measures implemented by the ministry according to the sectoral directions.

Administrative territorial reforms continued in the field of territorial administration and local self-government. In the framework of the community enlargement

process, 71 communities were formed instead of 915 communities, currently discussions are underway on the process of decentralization of powers. The introduction of electronic management systems in the form of citizen service offices (CSOs) in communities continued. In the current year, CSOs were created in 7 communities, in total, CSOs have been introduced in 75 settlements of 56 communities. The officials in charge assured that about 40 state services can be technically implemented through the mentioned system. It was noted that the electronic system of real estate tax collection attached to communities has been in operation for 2 years, and high indicators have been recorded. In 2022, 800,000 subscribers paid their municipal taxes online. With the support of the government and international partners, with a funding of around 21.9 million US dollars, the process of infrastructural development and logistical support of communities continued.

In the field of waste management, within the framework of the "Kotayk and Gegharkunik Solid Waste Management" project, the construction works of the Hrazdan sanitary landfill and the transfer stations of Martuni and Akunk are in the final stage, the tender for the purchase of garbage cans is announced for next year. A program proposal for the implementation of an integrated solid waste system in the other 8 regions has been developed, which is being discussed with international experts, and the design tender is expected to be announced at the beginning of the year.

In 2018-2022, 1897 subsidy programs were implemented in the communities with a total cost of around 90 billion AMD. The leading sectors are asphalt paving, lighting, renovation of public buildings, improvement of water infrastructure, kindergartens, etc. The preliminary applications for subsidy programs in 2023 have already been submitted. 459 projects with a total value of more  page 8

Ameriabank named Bank of the Year 2022 in Armenia by The Banker Magazine

Ameriabank has been named the Bank of the Year 2022 in Armenia by The Banker Magazine, a leading global finance news publication affiliated with the Financial Times (FT). Winners of the Bank of the Year Awards were announced at the 2022 Banker Awards ceremony held on December 1 in London. The prestigious award recognizes the financial performance, and innovative banking solutions of financial institutions in more than 130 countries.

In its selection, The Banker's panel of international judges considered Ameriabank's dynamic growth over the past years, its market-leading share per major financial metrics, improved profitability, strategic initiatives which have given the Bank



a competitive advantage in the market and the service quality. The judges highlighted also the Bank's successful course of digital transformation, the green portfolio and efforts in addressing climate change and other environmental issues in Armenia.

Artak Hanesyan, CEO at Ameriabank, commented: "We are proud to receive the

Bank of the Year prestigious award adding it to the impressive list of our accolades and achievements received throughout 2022. Our sound corporate governance, change-adaptive culture and digital transformation were key to successfully navigating the market turbulence and adapting to the progressively growing needs of digitally native customers. We will continue investments in digital transformation and human capital to enhance our operational efficiency and innovate in order to become a trusted financial technology space with seamless solutions to improve the quality of life."

Ameriabank is honored with the Bank of the Year Award for the eighth time.

page 7 ➡ than 112 billion AMD were presented. The Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure carried out monitoring of 481 complete projects which are under warranty, 80 percent of identified defects have been eliminated, the process continues.

Road network rehabilitation and development projects continued through modernization, quality and safety improvements. It was noted that the target of 500 km of road construction planned for 2022 has been overperformed. As of now, 530 km of asphalt paving has been carried out. The major part was the overhaul, medium repair works were also performed. The works being carried out in the Syunik Province, within the scope of which new roads are being built, was emphasized. It was reported about the progress of the North-South investment program, the Road Safety Improvement Program, and it was noted that a number of strategic projects have been completed. Current reforms and initiatives, steps towards road management and maintenance were presented.

The Prime Minister was reported about installation of gas cylinder equipment on vehicles and regular certification process in 2022; it was noted that as of November of this year, 66 licenses were issued, 152,000 gas cylinders were calibrated, about 5,000 gas cylinders were rejected during certification, of which 4,600 were outdated and potentially explosive. The process of issuing licenses and permits in other areas also continued, including 19 licenses for technical inspection stations. Competitions for the selection of operators in regions were organized for the introduction of the unified route network, in some regions the system is already being modernized, while in others the works are still in progress. The electronic system of road toll collection and the work being carried out towards its introduction, the projects implemented in the field of railway trans-



port were presented.

In the field of energy, the process of extending the operation period and ensuring safety of the second power unit of the Armenian NPP continued, as a result of which the license period was extended until 2031. The works of re-equipment of energy infrastructures, as well as the construction of new substations have been carried out, the projects of the construction of Iran-Armenia and Armenia-Georgia power transmission lines are in progress. The state support program for energy-efficient renovation of apartments and individual residential houses has been launched, the number of beneficiaries of which exceeds 400. The National Program for Renewable Energy and Energy Saving for 2022-2030 was developed.

In the field of soil, the improvement of the legislative framework continued in 2022. More than 50 subsoil use rights were granted, and the positive dynamics of the companies' proper fulfillment of their obligations was recorded as a result of administrative control. The development strategy of the mining sector is being developed.

In the field of migration, digitization of services and institutional reforms were carried out. The unified electronic platform for attracting foreign workers - workper-

mit.am, electronic systems for readmission, refugee and asylum seeker claim management were introduced. The housing provision program for families who forcefully emigrated from Azerbaijan in 1988-1992 is coming to end, which was implemented in Yerevan for the first time since 2019.

The Prime Minister emphasized the priority of reforms in territorial administration and infrastructure and inquired of a number of programs and works. Details were presented to the Head of the Government in this regard. There was an exchange of ideas about the measures implemented and initiated according to sectors, and the further actions were discussed.

The Prime Minister emphasized the quality assurance of subsidy programs, targeted implementation of community enlargement, addressability of electronic management systems, correct organization of the garbage collection process, asphaltting of rural roads, introduction of modern road maintenance and weighing systems, tightening of control over gas stations. A number of instructions were given to those in charge. Nikol Pashinyan noted the need for proper public awareness and active public communication regarding sectoral reforms.

Over 4.6 mln AMD to Aren Mehrabyan foundation: Power of One Dram Dec. beneficiary is Health Fund for Children of Armenia



At the end of November, IDBank and Idram summed up the results of the next program of “The Power of one dram” initiative. The entire amount collected during this month will be transferred to the Aren Mehrabyan Charitable Foundation.

“Aren Mehrabyan” Charitable Foundation is initiated by Aren Mehrabyan’s big family inspired by Aren’s dream of establishing a manufacturing center for aerospace engines and eVTOL systems in Armenia, thus laying the foundation of Armenian Aerospace Program.

The purpose of the foundation is to provide appropriate education to war veterans without a relevant profession who became disabled as a result of the war and, in connection with this, remained unemployed, as well as to all young people who aspire to receive an appropriate engineering education in the aerospace field.

The companies also announced the December beneficiary. The entire amount

collected in December will be transferred to the Children’s Health Fund of Armenia.

The Foundation helps organize the necessary treatment for children with serious health problems in the best clinics in Armenia and abroad. The Foundation also supports the re-equipment and modernization of regional medical facilities, as well as the international training of doctors. With more than a decade of experience in the field of charity, Armen Martirosyan personally helped hundreds of children struggling for life through public fundraising, organizing their treatment in the best clinics abroad before creating the foundation. And for a year and a half of its activity, the fund was able to help more than 2,000 children.

“We were delighted when we found out that our beloved IDBank and Idram will donate the entire amount of the December program of “The Power of One Dram” to the beneficiaries of our fund, which they really need. Last year, we were also honored to be the beneficiaries of this very important initiative, as a result of which we were able to help 7 children with serious immune system problems in the amount of AMD 8.057.944, buying them expensive life-saving medicine and giving them a chance to live. We will use the amount gathered in December to pay for the medical expenses of children who are fighting

for their lives. On the eve of the New Year, this is a great gift for our children, because their dream is usually about one thing: to get well soon and enjoy a carefree childhood. “The Power of One Dram” initiative has repeatedly proven that even one dram can work wonders. We ask everyone to actively use the Idram&IDBank application during December, thereby helping children who are fighting for life, to live.”

According to Tatevik Vardevanyan, Head of Communications unit at IDBank, this is already the second cooperation between the Bank and Idram with the Health Foundation for Children of Armenia. “On the eve of the New Year, we decided to once again stand next to children with life-threatening diseases: everyone is waiting for a miracle, let this miracle happen, the children will recover, and we and our clients will try to help them with all our strength, thoughts and deeds. Let me remind you that by making daily payments using the Idram&IDBank application, Idram and IDBank terminals, IDBanking.am online platform, Idram.am website, our users become goodwill ambassadors and help companies donate one dram to the initiative,” says Tatevik Vardevanyan.

COMPANIES ARE CONTROLLED BY CBA

Armenian FM, OSCE Chairman-in-Office discuss issues of regional security



On the sidelines of the OSCE Ministerial Council, Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan had a meeting with Zbig-

niew Rau, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and the Foreign Minister of Poland.

Issues of regional security and stability were discussed.

Touching upon the consequences of the recent Azerbaijani aggression against the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia, Ararat Mirzoyan emphasized that the withdrawal of the Azerbaijani armed forces from the sovereign territories of the Republic of Armenia and addressing the

existing humanitarian issues are the priorities for the Armenian side.

In this context, the importance of the OSCE Needs Assessment Mission in Armenia was highlighted. FM Mirzoyan voiced hope that it would contribute to reducing tension and establishing stability.

Minister Mirzoyan also briefed the OSCE CiO on the approaches of the Armenian side concerning the achievement of security and peace in the South Caucasus.

Armenia's ex-Ombudsman addresses political and diplomatic leaders at Australian Federal Parliament

The official launch of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union for the 47th federal parliamentary term took place on Tuesday 29th November 2022 at Australia's Parliament House, with a number of high-profile parliamentarians and diplomatic representatives in attendance along with community leaders and international keynote, Dr Arman Tatoyan, reported the Armenian National Committee of Australia.

The Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group), which is registered as part of the International Inter-Parliamentary Union, was re-formed for the current parliamentary term at the initiative of the ANC-AU on behalf of the community.

The group was launched during the 2022 ANC-AU Advocacy week, at an event hosted by the newly appointed co-convenors of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr Jerome Laxale MP, Member for Bennelong and the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Member for Bradfield. They both addressed the gathered, declaring their pride at their new posts and their solidarity with Armenian-Australians in their goals of enhancing bilateral relations between Armenia and Australia, achieving federal recognition of the Armenian Genocide and protecting indigenous Armenians of Armenia and Artsakh against attacks by Azerbaijan.

The launch event featured the ANC-AU's international guest of honour for the its Advocacy Week, Dr Tatoyan, who is founder of the Centre for Law and Justice and former Human Rights Defender of Armenia. He addressed attendees on the night and thanked the Australian Parliament for continuing their commitment to advancing relations with the Republic of Armenia. He thanked the convenors and members



of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union and presented the importance of international friends to Armenia at a time when its very existence is under threat from genocidal neighbours.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union Australia-Armenia Parliamentary Group aims, among other things, to foster closer political, cultural, trade and educational relations between Australia and Armenia, in particular, through the respective Parliaments.

The over 60 guests included current members of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union, including the co-convenors Laxale and Fletcher, Steve Georganas MP (Federal Member for Adelaide), Julian Leaser MP (Federal Member for Berowra), Josh Burns MP (Federal Member for Macnamara), Henry Pike MP (Federal Member for Bowman), as well as Ambassador Georges Papacostas (Greek Ambassador to Australia), Darren Bark (CEO of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies), Ronit Gabriel (Public Engagement Office at the Executive Council of Australian Jewry), Zackary Drury (Adviser at

the Office of the Prime Minister) and many parliamentary staffers.

The ANC-AU Youth Advocates, who are in Canberra participating in advocacy training, were also present at the event, which showcased Armenian culture through Armenian wine and brandy served to guests throughout the night. Attendees also witnessed a special cultural performance by members of the Armenian Sydney Dance Ensemble.

ANC-AU Executive Director, Michael Kolokossian addressed told the gathered: "The Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union plays a pivotal role in strengthening our already present ties between the two countries' legislatures. This group will continue to foster closer political, cultural, trade and educational relations between the two nations our community holds dear."

Mr Kolokossian concluded by saying: "The Armenian National Committee of Australia looks forward to working closely with the Inter-Parliamentary Union Australia-Armenia Parliamentary Group to help further strengthen those important ties between Australia and Armenia."

International community should force Azerbaijan to withdraw from Armenian lands, Member of Spanish Congress Jon Inarritu says



The international community should force Azerbaijan to respect the peace agenda and withdraw troops from Armenian lands, says Jon Inarritu, member of the Spanish Congress of Deputies representing the Basque Country.

On a two day-visit to Armenia, the MP visited the Armenian communities affected by the Azerbaijan aggression in mid-September.

“In Jermuk and Sotk we were shocked to see that the civilian infrastructure, houses were attacked in by Azerbaijani army. From my point of view, this is a clear violation of the international humanitarian law. At the same time, Azerbaijan is not respecting the peace agenda and is occupying the territory of Armenia,” Jon Inarritu says in an interview with *Public Radio of Armenia*.

Upon his return, the MP will talk to his colleagues and urge them to continue denouncing the aggression in the Parliament and asking the international community to act and force Azerbaijan to respect the peace agenda and de-occupy the Armenian lands.

Parliaments of a number of European countries have adopted resolutions denouncing the Azerbaijani attacks, calling for withdrawal from the Armenian sovereign territory, urging the release of prisoners of war, etc., while governments fail to take practical steps and distance themselves from parliamentary resolutions.

“While many Parliaments, like that of Spain, have approved resolutions denouncing the aggression by Azerbaijan, there is a gas deal signed between the European Union and Azerbaijan to promote the sale of gas to Europe due to the situation in Ukraine,” Jon Inarritu reminds.

However, to him, it’s illogical to sanction Russia for attacking Ukraine, while reinforcing the relationship with Azerbaijan, which is doing the same against Armenia.

The lawmaker believes the international community has the necessary tools to force Azerbaijan to respect the peace agenda. He reminds that Armenia and Azerbaijan are both members of the Council of Europe and the OSCE and adds that the structures “should take decisions regarding the attacks.”

“But we also have the United Nations with a lot of mechanisms to oblige, to force Azerbaijani to respect the international law and take measures against them, should they fail to do so. Azerbaijan is the sole aggressor, and the only solution now

is to force Azerbaijan to de-occupy the Armenians lands and to respect the peace agenda,” Jon Inarritu emphasizes.

The Spanish Congress of Deputies recently rejected an interstate agreement with Azerbaijan, citing violence against Armenia. While the ruling parties were interests in getting the agreement on protection of classified information ratified, it was possible to secure the result as one of the coalition parties abstained from voting.

The lawmaker hopes the Spanish Parliament will also recognize the Armenian genocide in the coming months.

“In Spain, a lot of regions like Catalonia and the Basque Country have recognized the Armenian Genocide, and now we are working to have it recognized by the country’s Parliament, because we think that there could be a majority of votes to approve the recognition of the Armenian Genocide during the next months. This is a question of justice for the Armenian people, and I hope the recognition will arrive soon,” the MP says.



Another crime within the genocidal pattern: Lemkin Institute issues Red Flag Alert after recent blockade of Artsakh by Azerbaijan



With the recent blockade of Artsakh by Azerbaijan, the Lemkin Institute has issued an update to its Red Flag Alert for Azerbaijan.

On the morning of December 3, a group of Azerbaijanis in civilian clothes blocked the route Stepanakert-Goris, the only road that connects the Armenians of Artsakh with the Republic of Armenia. For more than three hours, approximately 120,000 Artsakh Armenians were isolated from Armenia proper and surrounded by Azerbaijanis. After several hours of negotiation with the Azerbaijani regime, the route was finally reopened and communications were re-established.

The Lemkin Institute reminds the international community that this recent siege of Artsakh is not an isolated event but one in a series of criminal actions carried out by the autocratic regime of Ilham Aliyev in Azerbaijan, which continue without serious opposition from the international community.

“The total impunity enjoyed by Aliyev combined with the genocidal intent of his regime and many Azerbaijanis will almost guarantee the repetition and escalation of this type of violence,” the Institute said. “Many genocidal regimes will stage re-

hearsals for genocide in incremental steps, gauging the international response as they go. The Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention believes that Aliyev is doing just this — setting the stage for genocide by confirming international apathy on the Artsakh issue and slowly inuring international actors to the prospect of an aggressive Azerbaijani invasion of Artsakh, which is 99.7 percent Armenian and part of Armenia’s integral cultural heritage. Apart from some courageous votes in the Spanish and French parliaments, as well as statements of support for the Republic of Armenia by American lawmakers, Aliyev has faced no public repercussions for the aggressive wars and the atrocities carried out by his military or for the hateful rhetoric of his regime,” the statement reads.

Furthermore, the Lemkin Institute says, the total isolation of the Armenian population of Artsakh is a clear violation of the tripartite agreement of November 9, 2020, which put an end to the 44-day War.

“Today’s action is one of numerous violations of the agreement that the Azerbaijani regime has committed to date, which also include the aggressive war of September 13 against the Republic of Armenia that killed over 200 Armenians, among

them civilians, and resulted in the occupation of part of the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia. In addition, isolating Artsakh Armenians is a breach of international humanitarian law, international human rights law and, possibly, international criminal law. The genocidal intent of Baku has never been clearer and the actions carried out up to the moment highly predict this outcome,” it notes.

“Because the international community continues to choose to ignore the claims of Armenians for survival and self-determination in Artsakh, and because the media in general fails to portray a proper image of the conflict (if they cover the conflict at all), Aliyev is convinced of his invincibility. The combination of these factors, along with the geopolitics of the region and the European community’s engagement in gas-related business with the autocratic regime of Azerbaijan since the start of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, creates the perfect environment for the Baku regime to freely pursue its genocidal goals and territorial ambitions,” the statement continues.

The Lemkin Institute has issued several Red Flag Alerts and Statements regarding the threats of genocide to — and the Azerbaijani criminal actions against — Armenians in both Artsakh and Armenia proper.

“We reiterate that we strongly believe that the international community can prevent genocide in this case by putting coordinated diplomatic pressure on both the Aliyev regime in Azerbaijan and on its ally, the Erdogan regime in Turkey. The Western world must make it clear that it does not support genocide, lest it end up overseeing yet another catastrophe for the Armenian people. Western nations are at grave risk of facilitating genocide in this case and should not believe themselves to be beyond the reach of international criminal law,” the Institute emphasizes.

Kim Kardashian, Cher and other celebrities join initiative aimed at raising funds to restore Etchmiadzin Cathedral



Metal Alchemist, the new jewelry brand by Alex and Ani founder Carolyn Rafaelian, announced on December 1 it was partnering with Cher to help raise funds to restore the Etchmiadzin in Armenia – the oldest cathedral in the world, *Boston Globe* reports.

Eric Esrailian, a California-based physician, film producer and entrepreneur, is the third partner on the Rhode Island-based company’s first charitable initiative. The jewelry line, dubbed “Alchemy for Armenia,” consists of “posy” wire bracelets engraved with the first word’s of the Lord’s Prayer “Our Father” in Armenian, “Հայր ւրբ.”

According to Rafaelian, 100 percent of the profits from the sale of the posy wire bracelets will be donated to the Armenian Apostolic Church for the restoration and preservation of Etchmiadzin and the Khor Virap Monastery and Church Complex. Depending on the metal, the brace-

lets range in cost from \$28 to \$128 each.

In a statement sent to the *Globe* on Thursday, Cher said preserving and restoring the Etchmiadzin Cathedral and Khor Virap will also “preserve the rich faith, history and culture” of Armenia.

“It’s important that future generations are able to visit and appreciate this historic church,” said Cher. “My Armenian roots are a huge part of who I am, and I am thrilled to be a part of such a worthwhile cause.”

Businesswoman Kim Kardashian, who also has Armenian roots, posted about Metal Alchemist’s new line on her Instagram stories on Thursday.

“I’m always looking for ways to support Armenia and the most sacred, ancient places in the world,” said Kardashian in a recorded video on her Instagram story. “The oldest cathedral in the world is in Armenia, and it’s where I baptized my kids. It’s in desperate need of restoration so this brand Metal Alchemist is making these bracelets with 100 percent of the [profits] going toward the restoration of the cathedral.”

Kardashian said Metal Alchemist sent her several pieces and that she’s been in conversations with the company’s the

“whole team.” “I’m so proud of them,” said Kardashian.

The Etchmiadzin cathedral, which dates back to 303 A.D., was constructed near Mount Ararat and is considered to be the birthplace of Christianity in Armenia. In 2001, the cathedral was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and remains one of the most visited sites in the country.

“My faith is particularly important to me, and Armenians have relied on the Armenian Apostolic Church for centuries,” said Esrailian in a statement. “Giving back to the community has always been a priority for me, and I am so grateful to join my dear friends Carolyn and Cher in the effort to protect these holy sites.”

The initiative features bonded silver and “trialchemy” cuffs and rings that are engraved with Mount Ararat. The jewelry range in price starting at \$58 and increasing to \$498, and 20 percent of the profits will also go toward the restoration and preservation of Etchmiadzin and Khor Virap. Continued donations will be made thereafter in addition to Armenian non-profit organizations, said Rafaelian.

New York and Singapore are the world’s most expensive cities

The world’s most expensive cities are jointly New York and Singapore, according to the annual *Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)* survey.

It is the first time New York has topped the rankings. Last year’s number one, Tel Aviv, is now placed third.

Overall, the average cost of living in the world’s biggest cities is up 8.1% this year, the EIU survey reports.

The war in Ukraine and Covid’s impact on supply chains were identified as factors behind the increase.

Inflation was particularly high in Istanbul – with prices up by 86% – Buenos Aires (64%) and Tehran (57%).

High inflation in the US was one of the reasons for New York topping the list. Los Angeles and San Francisco also made the top 10.

Moscow and St Petersburg rose through the rankings by 88 and 70 places, to 37th and 73rd place respectively, partly as a result of Western sanctions over the war in Ukraine.

The survey compares costs in US dollars for goods and ser-

vices in 173 cities. Kyiv was not included in this year’s review.

The EIU compared more than 400 individual prices across over 200 products and services from 172 cities around the globe.

The most expensive cities in 2022...

- 1 = New York
- 1 = Singapore
- 3 = Tel Aviv
- 4 = Hong Kong
- 4 = Los Angeles
- 6 = Zurich
- 7 = Geneva

- 8 = San Francisco
- 9 = Paris
- 10 = Sydney
- 10 = Copenhagen

...and the least expensive

- 161 = Colombo
- 161 = Bangalore
- 161 = Algiers
- 164 = Chennai
- 165 = Ahmedabad
- 166 = Almaty
- 167 = Karachi
- 168 = Tashkent
- 169 = Tunis
- 170 = Tehran
- 171 = Tripoli
- 172 = Damascus

Robin the Robot joins Junior Eurovision in Armenia



Robin the Robot will join Iveta Mukuchyan, Garik Papoyan and Karina Ignatyan on 11 December as the 4th host of this year's Junior Eurovision in Yerevan. For the first time in Junior Eurovision

history, the contest will be hosted by an AI (artificial intelligence) driven robot.

Robin says they are a huge fan of the Contest, having dreamt of appearing on a big and bright stage:

'My lifelong dream has been to be surrounded by thousands of children and becoming friends with all the participants of Junior Eurovision. I think I am truly the biggest fan of the Contest, and my dream is finally coming true this year in Yerevan. So, let's be friends and spin the magic together!'

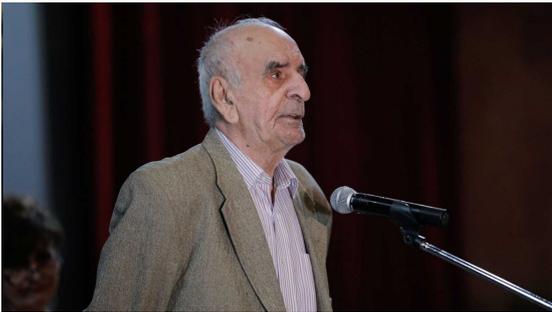
Robin is already a superstar in Armenia, and for good reason – as an AI robot, Robin can generate and share feelings.

They provide emotional support to hospitalized kids in their recovery phase, can play with them, and will assist in overcoming the difficulties of their treatment.

The Armenian companion is widely used not only by local hospitals, but also by leading American medical facilities. TIME Magazine featured Robin among the best 100 inventions of 2021.

Robin also has another very important role... they'll be introducing the Rehearsal Roundup shows on the official Junior Eurovision YouTube channels on Thursday 8 and Friday 9 December.

Dublin International Film Festival to Present Artavazd Peleshian's Films



The Dublin International Film Festival has announced select highlights from their 2023 film festival, including a double bill

of films from filmmaker Artavazd Peleshian, the *Armenian Film Society* reports.

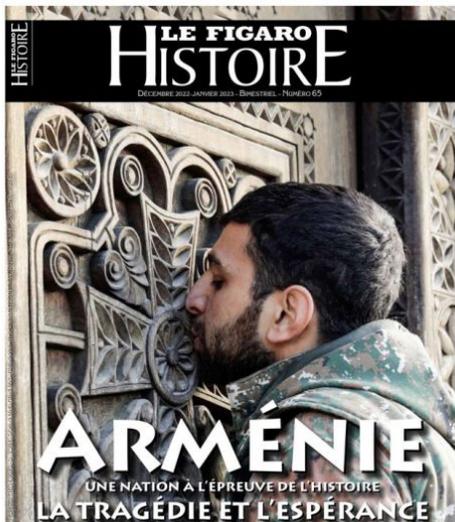
The festival will screen *Four Seasons* and *Nature* on Saturday March 4, followed by a Q&A hosted by Irish director Tadhg O'Sullivan.

Artavazd Peleshian produced his first film in 27 years in 2020 with *Nature*, an epic return to his major theme: humanity in harmony and conflict with

the natural world. Sergei Parajanov had described the filmmaker as one of cinema's rare "authentic geniuses." Artavazd Peleshian is known for films which are devoid of any narration and are composed of black and white documentary images. These images, often taken from archives, are often reworked, reframed, and edited together to produce an essay film.

The Dublin International Film Festival is scheduled to run from February 23 until March 4, 2023.

Le Figaro dedicated its December issue to the history of the Armenian people. From ancient times to the 44-day war



The prestigious French periodical Le Figaro dedicated the December issue of

its "Figaro - history" magazine to the history of the Armenian people. On the cover of the magazine is a photo by the famous French-Armenian photographer Antoine Agoudjian. The entire issue of the magazine is entitled "Armenia. A nation subjected to the test of history. Tragedy and Hope."

ARMENPRESS reports the magazine refers to various pages and episodes of the history of Armenia, from ancient times to the present day, the history of conflicts, the consequences of the war unleashed by Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The magazine contains works of different photographers from different times, while the authors of the text are both Ar-

menian and foreign reputable historians. Antoine Agoudjian's photos were used to illustrate the situation created in Artsakh after the 44-day war.

In addition to the "Figaro-history" magazine, "Figaro" also covered the Armenian military-patriotic NGO "Art of Staying Alive" on its website in November, again with photos by Antoine Agoudjian. Episodes from the training sessions of this Armenian organization, an interview with the president of the organization, Vova Vardanov, are presented. Filming was done during the training process itself, in which many representatives of different fields are involved.

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Armenian Identity Card

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

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

The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID)

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

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

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

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

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

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

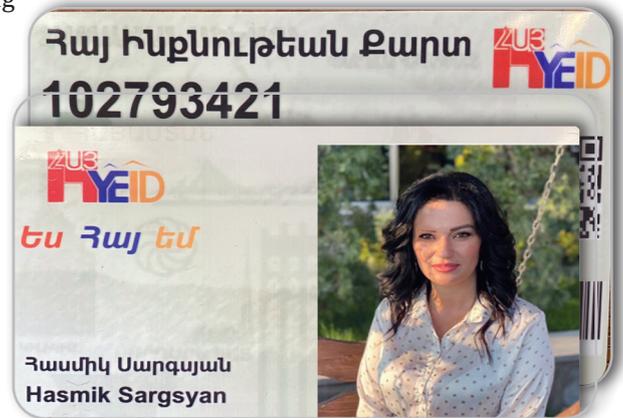
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