

# President reaffirms support for EU Eastern Partnership



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## Sargsyan, Merkel discuss Armenia-EU ties, Genocide centennial events

On a working visit to Latvia, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan on May 21 had a meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to Armenian-German interstate relations, and praised the fact that the bilateral agenda of cooperation that has considerably expanded and enriched in the recent period, has been consolidated by about sixty agreements.

President Sargsyan expressed gratitude to the German Government for continuous support to Armenia.

The interlocutors referred to Armenia-EU relations and the perspectives of

development. The Armenian President stressed the essential role of Germany in the deepening of those relations.

During the meeting reference was made to the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the commemoration events held in Germany and a number of other countries. President Sargsyan expressed gratitude to the German authorities for their position on the condemnation of the Armenian Genocide.

The interlocutors exchanged views on regional issues in the South Caucasus, including the process of peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group.



## Artsakh President meets with French Senators in Paris

On 20 May Artsakh Republic President Bako Sahakyan visited the French Senate and met a group of Senators.

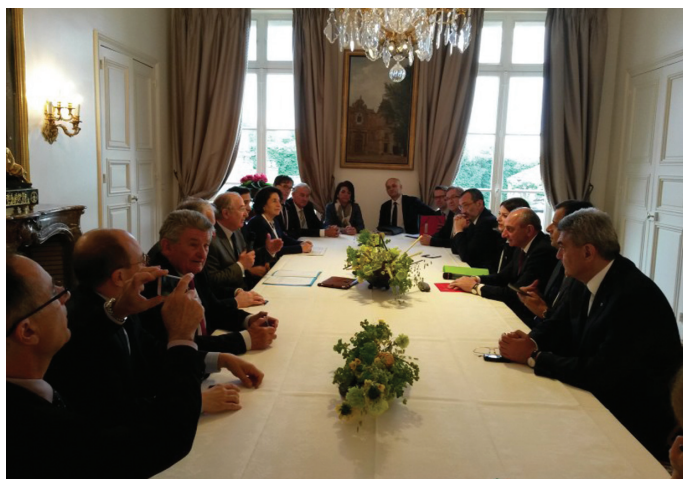
The President briefed the Senators on the state-building process in Artsakh, its domestic and foreign policy, the Azerbaijani-Karabakh conflict settlement process, regional trends and responded to questions.

The President underlined that official Stepanakert attaches importance to the development of bilateral relations with France, a friendly

country and one of the cradles of democracy, a country which became a second homeland for hundreds of thousands of Armenians, who escaped their historic land following the Armenian Genocide.

The President rated high the role of France in the Karabakh conflict settlement process and in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to France Vigen Chitechyan was present at the meeting.



## Armenia, Belarus refuse to sign Riga Summit Declaration over Crimea

European Union leaders begin a summit in Riga on May 21 with Eastern Partnership countries.

Disagreement over the conflict in Ukraine, and over the EU's reluctance to hold out membership prospects to the six states in its "Eastern Partnership", have held up drafting of a joint communique to be issued in Riga on Friday, diplomats said.

"These are not easy negotiations," one EU diplomat said after talks in Brussels on a draft text that will be reviewed in Latvia by foreign

ministers from the EU, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus on Thursday evening.

Armenia and Belarus refused to sign up to any statement that called Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula illegal and EU diplomats said a compromise text would be put to them.

It would note the EU's condemnation of the Crimean situation but also refer to partner governments' positions in a U.N. vote in March 2014.



## Azerbaijan objects to EU Summit statement over Karabakh



Azerbaijan nearly vetoed on Friday a joint declaration adopted at the European Union's latest summit with six ex-Soviet states because of the wording of its references to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov, who represented his country at the summit held in Riga, reportedly stormed out of its concluding session that discussed the text drafted by EU officials. News reports from the Latvian capital said Mammadyarov demanded changes relating to the Karabakh dispute.

The 13-page declaration calls for the resolution of ethnic and territorial disputes in the former Soviet Union "on the

basis of the principles and norms of international law." It expresses "full support to the mediation efforts by the co-chairs of the Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including at the level of [U.S., Russian and French] Presidents and their statements since 2009."

Those statements have said that a Karabakh settlement must be based on the internationally recognized principles of territorial integrity of states, peoples' self-determination and non-use of force.

"Azerbaijan had some problems with that," Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian told RFE/RL's Armenian service (Azatutyun.am) in Riga. "That is why their foreign minister left the conference room. They tried unsuccessfully to bring him back."

"But in the end, as a result of appropriate negotiations, it was agreed that the declaration will be adopted [without any amendments] and that Azerbaijan will [separately] present its objections regarding the corresponding provision," Nalbandian said.

"So what does this mean? It means

that Armenia and an important part of the international community ... agreed on that matter whereas Azerbaijan was again left isolated," he claimed.

Mammadyarov did not comment on the controversy immediately after the two-day summit, boycotted by President Ilham Aliyev, drew to a close. The chief Azerbaijani diplomat might have objected to the summit declaration's failure to explicitly uphold Azerbaijan's sovereignty over Karabakh.

Aliyev's chief foreign policy aide, Novruz Mammadov, told the Trend news agency later in the day that by signing up to the Riga declaration Baku made a "concession" to the EU. He did not elaborate.

Addressing the Riga forum on Thursday, President Serzh Sargsyan insisted that Baku cannot evoke the principle of territorial integrity in its efforts to regain control over the disputed territory. "Nagorno-Karabakh has nothing to do with Azerbaijan's territorial integrity because it has never been part of an independent Azerbaijan," Serzh Sargsyan said.

## President reaffirms support for EU Eastern Partnership

President Serzh Sargsyan has reaffirmed Armenia's commitment to deepening ties with the European Union in a way that would not run counter to its recent accession to a Russian-led alliance of ex-Soviet states.

"Armenia is committed to taking steps together with its European partners to form a new legal basis for our relationship," Serzh Sargsyan said at the start of a two-day EU summit in Riga late on Thursday. He stressed that a planned new Armenia-EU accord will be "compatible" with his country's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

There was no such compatibility with an Association Agreement, including a significant free-trade component, which Yerevan and Brussels were close to finalizing in 2013. The EU abandoned the agreement after Armenia unexpectedly decided to join Russia's trade bloc with Belarus and Kazakhstan.

The Armenian government and the European Commission are due to start talks soon on a less ambitious accord stemming from the EU's Eastern

Partnership program.

Serzh Sargsyan stated in Riga that Armenia has already benefited from the program. It has given new impetus to political and economic reforms in the country, he said.

"Armenia's European agenda remains a foreign policy priority," Sargsyan declared in another speech that was delivered in the Latvian capital earlier in the day. He attended a meeting of the leaders, among them German Chancellor Angela Merkel, of the European People's Party (EPP), a coalition of Europe's leading center-right parties. The ruling Republican Party of Armenia is also affiliated with the EPP.

Speaking at the EPP gathering, Sargsyan said Yerevan regards the Eastern Partnership as an opportunity to

advance domestic "modernization" based on Armenia's "common values" with Europe, rather than an opportunity to exploit the West's geopolitical rivalry with Russia. In that context, he warned against "public statements, containing one-sided rebukes," clearly referring to strong Western criticism of Russia's role in the conflict in Ukraine. The conflicting parties should seek to "understand each other and respect each other's issues" instead, he said.

Accordingly, Sargsyan refused to back a draft EPP declaration that accuses Russia, Armenia's main military ally, of unleashing military aggression against Ukraine. Yerevan also objected to similar language in a joint communique that was due to be adopted by the EU summit on May 22.

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## Participants of the Riga Summit adopt Joint Declaration

The Heads of State or Government and the representatives of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the representatives of the European Union and the Heads of State or Government and representatives of its Member States met in Riga on 21-22 May 2015. The participants of the summit adopted a joint declaration, in which they reconfirmed the high importance they attach to the Eastern Partnership as a specific dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

In the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, the Summit participants reaffirm the sovereign right of each partner freely to choose the level of ambition and the goals to which it aspires in its relations with the European Union.

The EU remains committed in its support to the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of all its partners. Full adherence to all the principles and commitments enshrined in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and 1990 Charter of Paris by all OSCE Participating States, as well as full respect for the principles and provisions of the UN Charter, is critical to our vision of a free, democratic, peaceful and undivided Europe.

The Summit participants strongly support all efforts aimed at de-escalation

and a political solution based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. They call on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk Agreements of September 2014 and the package of measures for their implementation of February 2015, supported by the quadrilateral Declaration of Heads of State and Government, and endorsed by UNSC Resolution 2202 of 17 February 2015.

The EU reaffirms its positions taken in the Joint Statement made at the EU-Ukraine Summit on 27 April, including on the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. The Summit participants reaffirm their positions in relation to 'UN General Assembly Resolution 68/262 on the territorial integrity of Ukraine'.

The Summit participants emphasize the need for the earliest peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the region on the basis of the principles and norms of international law. The resolution of conflicts, building trust and good neighborly relations are essential to economic and social development and cooperation.

They reiterate their full support to the mediation efforts by the co-chairs of the Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including at the level of Presidents and their statements since 2009.

Participants welcome the common understanding reached on the scope for a



future agreement between the EU and Armenia aimed at further developing and strengthening their comprehensive cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

They welcome the progress to date in the implementation of the Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements (VFA/RA) with Armenia and Azerbaijan respectively.

They look forward to consideration in due course of the opening of a visa dialogue with Armenia, provided that Armenia continues to ensure sustained progress in the full implementation of the VFA/RA.

The Summit participants welcome the association of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to the framework programme for research and innovation Horizon 2020 and look forward to finalising the agreements for association of Armenia and Georgia.

They look forward to the launching of negotiations on an EU-Armenia Aviation Agreement at the earliest opportunity.

## Armenian governor 'shot at' In his car

Law-enforcement authorities in Armenia said late on Wednesday that an unknown gunman opened fire on a car carrying Suren Khachatryan, the governor of the southeastern Syunik province notorious for violent conduct.

According to the Investigative Committee, Khachatryan, his driver and assistant came under fire on the road connecting the regional capital Kapan to Goris, the governor's hometown also located in Syunik. "Nobody was hurt," the committee said in a statement.

The statement added that Yerevan-based senior officers from the committee and the Armenian police rushed to the scene immediately after the reported shooting. "Necessary investigative measures are being taken to clarify all circumstances of

the incident," it said.

The statement also said that a criminal case has been opened under a Criminal Code clause dealing with murder attempts. No arrests were reported in the following hours.

Khachatryan is one of Armenia's most controversial government officials because of a long history of violence involving himself and members of his family dominating the political and economic life of Syunik. The alleged shooting attack on his car came amid a lingering uproar sparked by the most recent violent incident linked with the family.

Khachatryan's equally notorious son Tigran was questioned by the Investigative Committee at the weekend in connection with a May 2 brutal beating near Goris of

two men by a larger group of local residents. The severely injured victims claim that the attackers were led by Tigran Khachatryan. The latter denies the allegations.

The May 2 incident rekindled allegations by opposition politicians, civic activists and media commentators that the Syunik governor continues to enjoy impunity because of his staunch loyalty to President Serzh Sargsyan. Accordingly, there have been renewed calls for his ouster.

Khachatryan was already sacked in June 2013 shortly after Tigran and one of his bodyguards shot and killed a Goris-based businessman just outside the Khachatryan family's plush villa in the small town. The shooters were arrested but set free three months later. Suren Khachatryan was reappointed as Syunik governor a year later.



## U.S. Embassy helps make the Armenian border more secure



In a ceremony at the Armenia Border Guard headquarters, U.S. Ambassador Richard M. Mills Jr., joined by National Security Service Deputy Director Lieutenant General Arzumanyan and Border Guard Troops Commander Major General Armen Abrahamyan, inspected equipment from the U.S. government that will assist the border guards in keeping weapons of mass destruction, biological hazards, and other threats from crossing Armenia's borders. The equipment includes a multi-media lab that will be used in training Armenian border guards and other tools that will enhance the ability of border guards to control the flow of sensitive exports across the board and

strengthen Armenia's borders against transnational threats.

This assistance is part of the U.S. Government's comprehensive nonproliferation programs that strengthen the ability of the Armenian Government to effectively counter transnational threats from international crime, arms smugglers, and risks from weapons of mass destruction. The United States and Armenia are working together toward common goals of democracy, security, and peace, both in Armenia and in the region.

Over the past ten years, the U.S. Embassy has partnered with various ministries and agencies to develop Armenia's border security capacity. Leading the U.S. Embassy's efforts in Armenia are the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program, the Defense Threat Reduction Office (DTRO), and Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC). "Our border security cooperation is robust, and we are committed to an open door partnership with Armenia," said Ambassador Mills during his remarks.



## Armenia, Russia 'working hard' on Gyumri massacre probe



Armenian and Russian law-enforcement bodies are continuing their joint efforts to solve last January's deadly shooting spree in Gyumri blamed on a Russian army soldier, Prosecutor-General Gevorg Kostanyan said on May 20.

Kostanyan did not clarify, however, whether Valery Permyakov, the arrested soldier accused of murdering the seven members of a local Armenian family, will be handed over to the Armenian authorities.

"I can understand those people who

took to the streets [of Gyumri] and rightly demanded that the case be transferred to Armenian jurisdiction," he said in a speech in the National Assembly.

"Regarding the investigation into the case, I can only say at this point that now there is an unprecedented situation in which law-enforcement bodies in both Armenia and Russia have never been before," he said. "We are working intensively with our Russian colleagues to try to find a solution congruent with international legal norms."

"Rest assured that on this issue we all have not only the same feelings but also the same approaches and expectations," Kostanyan added vaguely in an annual report on Armenian prosecutors' activities presented to lawmakers.

Kostanyan wrote to Russia's Prosecutor-General Yuri Chayka shortly after being confronted by thousands of furious protesters in Gyumri demanding that Permyakov, who is kept at the local

Russian army headquarters, be prosecuted and tried by relevant Armenian bodies. It is still not clear whether Chayka has replied to the letter requesting the suspect's extradition.

The Armenian press claimed late last month that Kostanyan has paid a confidential visit to Moscow to discuss the matter with his Russian counterpart. Armenia's Office of the Prosecutor-General declined to refute or confirm those reports.

Various Russian officials said earlier that Permyakov will be tried in Armenia but by a Russian military court. They argued that Russia's constitution forbids the extradition of Russian nationals to foreign states.

Many in Armenia point to a 1997 Russian-Armenian treaty regulating Russian military presence in the country. The treaty stipulates that Russian military personnel charged with crimes committed outside their installations shall be prosecuted by Armenian authorities.

## EU moves to open talks on new deal with Armenia

The European Union's executive body has asked the EU member states to authorize it to open official negotiations on a new agreement to deepen political and economic ties with Armenia, a senior official in Brussels said on May 19.

The deal would serve as a less ambitious substitute for an EU-Armenia Association Agreement which was all but finalized almost two years ago. The Armenian government precluded its signing after unexpectedly deciding in August 2013 to join the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

Yerevan has since been trying to work out a different legal framework for closer ties with the EU that would not run counter to its membership in the Russian-led bloc. Earlier this year Armenian and EU officials identified concrete areas to be covered by it. The executive European Commission now needs a "mandate" from the EU's member states for the start of official negotiations on the new accord.

According to the senior EU official, who did not want to be identified, the commission formally requested such permission on Tuesday. It remained unclear, though, whether the mandate could be issued during this week's EU summit in Latvia's capital Riga.

The summit slated for May 21-22 will



focus on the EU's Eastern Partnership program offering privileged partnership to six former Soviet republics. Three of them -- Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine -- have already signed association agreements with the EU.

The EU official confirmed that the planned deal with Yerevan will contain not only political but also economic provisions. "The new framework agreement with Armenia will certainly have a substantial trade and investment chapter," he told reporters from Brussels.

"There will be certain areas which are not covered by [World Trade Organization] disciplines," the official said. "For example, the fields of investment, procurements or some other areas where Armenia will be more free -- these

are also not covered by the Eurasian Economic Union -- to provide for more market openings."

The official stressed that unlike the scrapped Association Agreement, the planned deal will not envisage free-trade arrangements. He argued that just like the EU member states Armenia and the other ex-Soviet republics aligned in the EEU are not allowed to negotiate free-trade deals on their own.

According to Armenian government statistics, the EU remained Armenia's leading trading partner last year, accounting for 26.6 percent of its commerce with the outside world. By comparison, the EEU's share in Armenian foreign trade stood at 24.5 percent in 2014.

## Armenian PM again rules out recession



Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamian insisted on May 21 that the Armenian economy will continue to grow this year contrary to gloomy forecasts made by international lending institutions.

Abrahamian forecast an economic growth rate of "at least 2-3 percent" in opening remarks made at a weekly session of his cabinet. He claimed that it could even reach 4 percent if the

Armenian government manages to implement all of its planned "programs." He did not elaborate on them.

The government forecast 4.1 percent growth in its 2015 state budget that was approved by parliament late last year. That target has looked increasingly unrealistic in view of a deteriorating economic situation in Russia, Armenia's number one trading partner and main source of worker remittances.

The International Monetary Fund said in April that Armenia's Gross Domestic Product will actually shrink by 1 percent due to knock-on effects of the Russian recession. Citing the same external factor, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) forecast an even steeper GDP

drop last week.

Abrahamian dismissed such projections as "empty talk." But he was careful not to openly attack the IMF or the EBRD, targeting instead his domestic political opponents.

"I don't know which political figures or forces want the government to fail and the economy to shrink," he said. "But I am convinced that their wishes will not materialize and that we will achieve economic growth."

The premier also said that continued growth in Armenia will be "evident" in the second half of the year. Citing unofficial government estimates, he said that the domestic economy already expanded by roughly 2.2 percent year-on-year in January-April.



## Armenian, Georgian PMs meet after South Ossetia controversy



Prime Ministers Hovik Abrahamian of Armenia and Irakli Gharibashvili of Georgia met in Batumi over the weekend for talks which their offices said focused on bilateral economic ties.

Abrahamian travelled to the Georgian Black Sea city two weeks after official Tbilisi protested against Armenian parliament speaker Galust Sahakyan's meeting with a leader of South Ossetia, a breakaway Georgian region.

Sahakyan and Anatoly Bibilov met early this month during their separate visits to Nagorno-Karabakh. Sahakyan downplayed their short conversation as "private" and impromptu.

The explanation did not satisfy the Georgian government, which condemned the contact with the representative of what it regards as an "occupational regime" installed by Russia. The Armenian ambassador in Tbilisi was summoned to the Georgian Foreign Ministry and warned of "damage to bilateral relations" on May 4.

The controversy prompted Abrahamian to telephone Gharibashvili later on May 4. According official Georgian sources, the Armenian premier "reiterated firm support for Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty."

Abrahamian's and Gharibashvili's press offices made no mention of the diplomatic scandal in their separate statements

on the Batumi talks. They both described Georgian-Armenian relations as "friendly and good-neighborly" and said the two men discussed ways of boosting bilateral commercial ties.

A short video released by Gharibashvili's office showed the two prime ministers warmly greeting each other at Batumi airport and strolling along the city's palm-lined seaside boulevard.

Among Armenian officials accompanying Abrahamian was Transport and Communications Minister Gagik Beglaryan, suggesting that Georgian-Armenian transport projects were on the agenda of the talks.

Last December Beglaryan and Georgian Deputy Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili signed in Yerevan an agreement on the construction of a new bridge at the main Georgian-Armenian border crossing. Officials from both countries said the Friendship Bridge will facilitate bilateral commerce and travel.

Armenia and Georgia are also due to start building this fall a fourth high-voltage transmission line connecting their power grids. According to the Armenian Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, the \$105 million project will enable the two neighboring states to more than triple mutual electricity supplies.

While in Yerevan, Kvirikashvili also discussed trade-related implications of Armenia's accession to the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and Georgia's Association Agreement with the European Union.

The EEU membership, effective from January, requires the Armenian government to gradually adopt significantly higher duties that are collected by Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan from goods imported from third countries. Many expected that this would lead to the abolition of a free trade regime existing between Georgia and Armenia. However, Armenian officials indicated late last year that Yerevan will not have to scrap it after joining the ex-Soviet bloc.

## Iraq, Syria sharply boost Armenian cigarette exports

Exports of Armenian cigarettes continued to grow rapidly last year thanks to a near-doubling of their deliveries to Iraq and Syria, their principal markets abroad, according to government statistics.

Data from the Armenian customs service revealed by Hetq.am shows a more than 71 percent surge in cigarette exports that totaled \$116.6 million in 2014. They stood at just \$16.3 million in 2011.

The Iraqi market generated over two-thirds of the Armenian tobacco industry's total export revenue. This explains why Armenia's trade with Iraq rose by almost 39 percent to \$106 million in 2014.

The Armenian and Iraqi governments are eager to further expand bilateral trade, mainly carried out through Iran, with growing contacts between their senior officials

as well as businesspeople from the two nations. In particular, they helped to launch in February a commercial flight service between Yerevan and Baghdad and Erbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan where Armenia plans to open a consulate this year.

Iraq's Transport Minister Baqir Jabr al-Zubeidi and a delegation of Iraqi businesspeople accompanying him arrived in Armenia on the inaugural Baghdad-Yerevan flight. Zubeidi called for closer Armenian-Iraqi commercial ties during talks with Armenian Economy Minister Karen Chshmarityan in Yerevan.

Another war-torn Arab state, Syria, became the second most important market for Armenian-made cigarettes in 2014. The Armenian customs service registered an almost six-fold increase in cigarette

exports to Syria that were worth \$18.2 million.

Virtually all of those cigarettes were manufactured by three tobacco firms that are part of the Grand Holding group founded by Hrant Vardanyan, one of Armenia's most famous businesspeople who died in April 2014. The conglomerate, which also comprises the country's largest chocolate and confectionery manufacturer, is now owned and run by his two sons. Much of the tobacco used by it is grown in Armenia.

Grand Holding's booming exports also helped to push up output in the broader Armenian tobacco industry. According to the National Statistical Service (NSS), it grew by more than half last year, accounting for 7.6 percent of the country's overall industrial production.



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### 1 ROOM

- 1696.**Tumanyan str.**, 5/4, stone bld, 1 bedroom, h-3m, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 160.000 USD.
- 1440.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 110 sq.m., 1 bedroom, h-3m,euro repaired, heating system, furnished,parking,. Price: 350.000 USD.
- 1715- **Sayat Nova Ave.**, 5/4, 70sq.m, stone bld, h-4m, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 110.000 USD
- 1680- **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/4, 68sq.m, 1 bedroom, old repair, possibility of gas. Price: 86.000 USD.
- 1674. **Abovyan str.**, 2nd floor,70sq.m., 1 bedroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 135.000 USD
- 1698-**Aram str.**, Newly built, 14/5, 62sq.m, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, AC, security system, parking. Price: 120.000 USD.

### 2 ROOMS

- 3003.**Sayat-Nova str**, 5/3, 105sq.m, 2bedrooms, stone building, capially repaired. Price: Negotiable
- 1560.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built,10/3, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired,climate control, parking. Price: 400.000 USD.
- 2818.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 120sq.m, 2 bedrooms,2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, Ac, furnished . Price:400.000USD
- 1156.**Komitas Ave.**, Hambardzumyan str. 5/3, 110sq.m, 2 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system, kitchen is furnished. Price: 150.000 USD negotiable.
- 2949.**Aram str.**, Newly built, 1st floor, 143 sq.m, 2 bedrooms, zero state, Price: 2000 USD per sq.m.
- 2300.**Northern ave.**, Newly built, 6/2, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC,parking. Price: 400.000 USD.

### 3 ROOMS

- 3046.**Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 9/9, 81sq.m.,with-out divisions. Price:Negotiable.
- 3012.**Aram str**, Newly built, /7th floor, 136sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, parking, facing to bulvar, Price:300.000 USD negotiable.
- 2998.**North Ave**, Newly built, 9/6, 181sq.m, 3bedrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking, Price: 700.000 USD
- 2682.**Aram Str.**, Newly built,13/6 187sq.m., 3 bedrooms,2 bathrooms, 2 open balconies, capially repaired,heating system, 2AC, 2 garages, view to garden. Price: 550.000 USD negotiable.
- 2958.**Pushkin str.**, 5/2, 140 sq.m., stone building,4 bedrooms, capially repaired,heating system. Price: Negotiable.
- 2895.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 300sq.m,3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, AC. Price: negotiable
- 2802.**Amiryan str.**, Newly built,8/4, 166sq.m,3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, central heating,AC,security system. Price:320.000 USD.
- 1104.**Komitas Ave.**, **Aram Khachatryan str.**, 5/2, 125sq.m,stone bld, h-2.75m.,3 bedrooms, office, 2 bathrooms, old repair, gas, garage. Price: 130.000 USD
- 2836.**Pushkin str.**, 4/4,5, 400sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC. Price: 460.000 USD.

- 2990.**North Ave.**, Newly built, 11th floor, 295sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking. Price: Negotiable.

### PREMISES

- 1789.**Charents str.** Land-1270sq.m,5 storied building, each floor-400sq.m.,basement, capially repaired, parkings. Price:4.000.000 USD negotiable
- 1598.**Komitas, Nairy Zaryan str.**, 1000 sq.m., working restaurant,1st line, capially repaired. Price: negotiable.
- 1603.**Northern Ave.**, Ground floor of the building, 160 sq.m.,zero level, window glasses. Price: 2.600.000 USD.
- 2035.**Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 220sq.m.,1st line, facade-55m.,capially repaired, h-5m., cellar. Price: Negotiable
- 2013.**Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 265sq.m.,1st line, capially repaired, heating system, cellar. Price: 1.300.000\$ negotiable
- 2012.**Mashtots Ave.**, 5/1,2, 140sq.m.,window glasses, capially repaired, AC. Price: 1.100.000\$ negotiable
- 2155.**Mashtots ave.**, 3storied building, 540sq.m., each floor-180sq.m, window glasses,parking. Price:3.600.000 USD
- 2020.**Hr. Kochar str.**, Land-300sq.m,1st line, 4storied building, 1080sq.m.,each floor-270sq.m, h-3.6m,with-out divisions, parkings, 3 access. Price:1.400.000 USD negotiable
- 1986.**Cascade.** Land 1000sq.m. 3storied building1200sq.m., unfinished, parking. Price:1.000.000 USD
- 2167.**Sayat Nova str.**, newly built, 38sq. m, capially repaired. Price: 200.000 USD



- 2175.**Tumanyan str**, Ground and 1st floor of the building, 600sq.m, ground floor300sq.m, 1st floor-220sq.m, basement-80sq.m, - 1st line, zero level, 2 entrances, facade-15m, 4 window glasses, capially repaired, heating system, AC, Price: 3500 USD per sq.m,
- 2172. **Isahakyan str**, 92sq.m, 1st line, 7 degrees above zero level, facade-9m, 2 window glasses, h-3.20m, 2 halls, cabinet, bathroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 450.000 USD

### LANDS

- 2122.**Davitashen**, 1800 sq.m., water, gas, electricity, possible to sell separately 600 sq.m., and 1200 sq.m. Price: 150 USD per sq.m.
- 2121.**Demirchyan str.**, 1338 sq.m.,building permits. Price: 2million USD.
- 2013.**Cascade.** 1000 sq.m. building permits, first line, gas, water and electricity possibilities. Price 460.000USD
- 1402.**Hr. Kochar Str.**, 1100 sq. m.,facade -25 m. Price negotiable.
- 2090.**Lori region**, close to Stepanavan, Gyargyar village, 6 hectares, forest 2 hectare has building permits, 3 water source, electricity. Price: 100.000USD.
- 2406.**Avan**, Mher Mkrtchyan block, 1000 sq.m., electricity, gas, water, the district is inhabited. Price: 30USD per sq.m
- 2310.**Monument, Babayan str**, 1000 sq. m, facade-25m, privatized, Price:350 USD negotiable
- 2107.**Monument**, 2400sq.m, building permits, building project. Price: 400 USD per sq.m.
- 2413.**Ashtarak roadway**, 1000sq.m, building permits, building project. Price: Negotiable
- 2414.**Demirchyan str.** land-750sq.m., building permits. Price:750.000 USD.

### PRIVATE HOUSES

- 3739.**Nork Marash** Land- 2000sq.m, two separate houses, total bld-600sq.m, capially repaired, swimming pool, sauna, guard house. 2 car parking, garden. Price: 950.000 USD
- 3348.**Blur, Barbyus str.** Land - 800 sq.m, 3 storied bld.-700 sq.m, 4bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control. Price: 1.2 million USD
- 3146.**Aygestan**, Land-500 sq.m., 5 storied bld-765 sq.m.,each floor-180 sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, hjeating system,elevator. Price: 2.300.000 USD.
- 3583.**Nork-Marash**, Land-1100sq.m,2 storied bld-520sq.m,6 bedrooms,5 bathrooms, capially repaired,heating system, AC, swimming pool, garden. Price:1.350.000 USD.
- 3432.**Aygedzor**, Land - 1021 sq m ,3 storied bld.-501 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, central heating, AC, boiler room garden, swimming pool, sauna, garage, security system. Price:1.000.000 USD
- 3576.**Avan**, Tsarav Akhbyur /near Botanical garden/, Land-560sq.m., 4 storied building-560sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms, a kitchen, office, capially repaired, heating system, swimming pool, garden, 2 car parking. Price: 850.000 USD
- 3606.**Avan**, Tsarav Akhbyur/near Botanical garden/, Land-1000sq.m.,3 storied building-750sq.m.,6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capially repaired, heating system swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking. Price-1.500.000 USD
- 3574.**Blur**, Land-779sq.m.,2 storied building-720sq.m.,4 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, heating system,sauna swimming pool, garden. Price: 2.000.000 USD
- 3590 **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-450 sq.m.,4 storied building-470sq.m.,3bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: 680.000 USD
- 3651.**Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-900sq.m.,5 storied building-800sq.m.,4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price:1.700.000 USD.
- 3401.**Antarayan str**, Newly built, land-700sq.m, 3 storied bld-690sq.m, 5 bedrooms, capially repaired. Price: 1.300.000 USD
- 3712 **Cascade** Newly built, land-450sq.m, 4 storied bld-600sq.m, zero state. Price: 550.000 USD

### NEWLY BUILT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

- 74.**Cascade**, Verin Antarayin. 136-315 sq m.,walls plastered, electricity, water, gas, euro windows,no exploitation fees. Price:1200 USD per sq.m, parking -15.000 USD.
- 107.**Monument**, Verin Antarayin. inhabited, 8 floors, gas, windows, street view -1000 USD per sq.m., city looking -1500 USD per sq.m., parking - 4 million USD preliminary.
- 87.**Sayat-Nova str.**, 21 floors, 3 bedrooms -188 sq.m., 199 sq.m., Price 1900 USD per sq.m., 2 bedrooms have a beautiful sight - 117 sq.m., 120 sq.m., 124 sq.m.,Price: 1700 USD per sq.m., climate control, gas.
- 93.**Kievyan str.**, Given to the operation in October 2011, 16 floors, walls plastered, windows, exterior doors, h -3, 15 m, gas,parking. Price: 1500-1600USD per sq.m,parking-12 000 USD. Possible with mortgage, for 13 years term.
- 94.**Masiv**. 3floors,8 flats,each flat has 3 bedrooms, 210 sq.m., parking. Price: negotiable.
- 130.**Antarayan str.**, 34 flats, 110-275 sq.m., 4 penthouses-200-275sq.m,available sevices-car wash, cleaning service, garbage removal service, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 131.**Busand str.**, commercial, office and residential areas, penthouse, available sevices-car wash, cleaning service, garbage removal service, parking. Price: Negotiable





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## 1 ROOM

- 2037. **Baghramyan str.**, 5/2, 60sqm, 1 bedroom, euro repaired, gas, heating system, AC, modern furnished, equipped. Price: negotiable
- 2189. **Vardanants str.**, Newly built, 24/12, 90 sqm, 1 bedroom, capitolly repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 1000 USD.
- 2099. **Sayat-Nova Ave.**, 12/6, 1 bedroom, capitolly repaired, gas, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 600 USD.
- 1972. **Northern ave.**, 8/4, 80sq.m., 1 bedroom, 2 bathrooms, open kitchen, capitolly repaired, climate control. Price: 1200 USD
- 2171. **Tumanyan str.**, Newly built, 5th floor, 94 sq.m., 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, capitolly repaired, central heating, furnished, equipped. Price: 1000 USD
- 2367. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 9th floor, 98 sq.m., capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished equipped. Price: Negotiable.

## 2 ROOMS

- 2302 **North Ave.**, Newly built, 11/4, 137sq.m, 2bedrooms, 2bathrooms, capitolly repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2000 USD
- 2295 **North Ave.**, Newly built, 16/15, 173sq.m., 2bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, furnished. Price: 5000 USD
- 2290 **Bayron str.**, Newly built, /5th floor, 220sq.m, 2bedrooms, study, open kitchen, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, climate control, furnished, parking. Price: 4000 USD
- 1780. **Amiryan str.**, Newly built, /13th floor, 82 sq.m, 2 bedrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 1700 USD negotiable.
- 942. **Teryan str.** 4/3, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped. Price: 1500 USD.
- 1950. **Buzand/Mashtots area.** Newly built, 8th floor, 163 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, climate control, furnished, open balcony. Price: 2500 USD.
- 1681. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 6/2, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- 1535. **Busand str.**, Newly built, 7/4, 82sq.m, 2bedrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, parking, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable.
- 2089. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 8/6, 120sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, climate control, furnished, equipped. Price: 2500 USD
- 1738. **Amiryan str.**, 8/8, 159sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 1951. **Busand str.**, Newly built, 13th floor, 122sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, climate control. Price: 2500 USD
- 1406. **Sayat Nova ave.**, 7/3, 110sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable
- 2109. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 10/4, 137sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, central heating, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- 2243. **Buzand str.**, Newly built, 17/4, 125sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 2000 USD
- **Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 14/5, 120sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, partly furnished. Price 2000 USD



parking. Price: 2500 USD

- 2316 **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 6th floor, 227sq.m., 4bedrooms, 2bathrooms, guest toilet, capitolly repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2500 USD
- 2303 **Hanrapetutyan str** Newly built, 9/5, 165sq.m, 3bedrooms, 1bathroom, 1 guest toilet. capitolly repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2000 USD
- 2286. **Sose str.**, Newly built, 12/2, 154sq.m, 3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 1700 USD
- 2257. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 17/16, 160 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 2021. **Teryan Str.**, Newly built, 9/8, 9, 245 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished. Preliminary price: 3500 USD.
- 2005. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 8/8, 130 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished, parking. Price: 2200 USD.
- 1723. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 8/4., 170 sq.m 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, open kitchen, capitolly repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 2000 USD.
- 1981. **Vardanants Str.**, Newly built, 14/14, 140 sq m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, 3 open balconies, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- 1793. **Teryan str.**, Newly built, 8th floor, 260 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, study, capitolly repaired, climat control, parking, unfurnished (possible to furnish), Price: 3500 USD.
- 1720. **Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 16/10, 179 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, central heating, AC, cellar- 25sq.m, with or without furniture, parking, Price 3000 USD negotiable
- 2195. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 300sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capitolly repaired, climate control, AC, parking. Price: 5000 USD
- 2261. **Hin Yerevantsi, /North Avenue/,** Newly built, 10/3, 124sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 1700 USD
- 2084. **Tumanyan str.**, 4th floor, 200sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, climate control, parking. Price: 5000 USD

USD

- 2252. **Northern ave.**, 7th floor, 350 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, open balconies, capitolly repaired, climate control, parking. Price Negotiable.

## PRIVATE HOUSES

- 1335 **Baghramyan str.**, Land-200sq.m, 3storied bld-300sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3bathrooms, capitolly repaired, furnished. Price: 3000 USD
- 1336 **Aygedzor**, Land-1000sq.m, 2 storied bld-240sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, furnished. Price: 2000 USD
- 1337 **Davtashen** Land-406sq.m, 3 storied bld-306sq.m, 4bedrooms, 2bathrooms, capitolly repaired, furnished. Price: 3900 USD
- 1323. **Monument, Babayan str.**, Land-400sq.m, 3storied bld-300sq.m, 4bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitolly repaired. Price: Negotiable
- 1248. **Aygedzor**, Land - 1021 sq m, 3 storied bld. - 501 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, capitolly repaired, central heating, AC, sauna, boiler room garden, swimming pool, garage, alarming system, security system. Price: 8000 USD.
- 999. **Aygedzor**, Land - 1000 sqm, basement + 2 floors- 310 sqm, capitolly repaired, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, newly furnished, equipped, sauna, swimming-pool. Starting Price: 5000 USD.
- 1094. **Noy block**, Land-450sqm, 2 storied building - 220sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden. Price: 2000USD.
- 1195. **Nork, Armenakyan str.**, Land - 2000 sq.m, 4 storied bld.-520 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms,

capitolly repaired, heating system, sauna, gym, furnished, swimming-pool, garden. Price: 4.000 USD negotiable.

- 1142. **Djrevej**, Bagrevand community. Land-1000 sq.m., 3 storied bld.-700 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, pantry, playing room, capitolly repaired, no furniture/ can be furnished, if necessary /garage for 2 cars. Price: 4 000 USD.

- 1293. **Nork-Marash**, Land-1100sq.m, 2 storied bld-520 sq.m, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, swimming pool, garden. Price: 7.000 USD

- 327. **Nork-Marash**, Land-500sq.m., 4 storied building-600 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking. Price-4000 USD

- 1306. **Tsarav Akhbyur** /near Botanical garden/, Land-1000sq.m., 3 storied building-750sq.m., 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capitolly repaired, heating system swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking, with or without furniture. Price: 6000-8000 USD negotiable

- 1288. **Tsarav Akhbyur** /near Botanical garden/, Land-560sq.m., 4 storied building-560 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms, a kitchen, office, capitolly repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden, 2 car parking. Price: 5000 USD

- 1197. **Blur**, Land-779sq.m., 2 storied building-720sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, study, capitolly repaired, heating system, sauna swimming pool, garden. Price: 8000 USD

- 1312. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-450sq.m., 4 storied building-470sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: Negotiable

- 1317. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-900sq.m., 5 storied building-800sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: Negotiable.

- 1323. **Monument, Babayan str.**, Land - 400 sq.m, 3 storied bld-300sq.m, each floor-100sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable

## PREMISES

- 2049. **Teryan str.**, ground floor+basement, 1st line, 200sq.m, repaired. Price: 6.000 USD
- 1693. **Malatia-Sebastia** 4 storied building, 1200sq.m, each floor-300sq.m, 2 separate entrances, climate control, 2 elevators, basement, parking. Price: 15USD per sq.m.

- 1526. **Byuzand str.**, 5/semi-basement, 170 sqm., 4-5 degrees below zero level, window glasses, cellar - 50 sq.m., 6 rooms, the largest is 30 sq.m., 2 entrances, 2 lavatories. Price 2000 USD per month, negotiable.

- 1408. **Zarobyan str.**, /parallel to Baghramyan str./, 2 storied building, 600 sqm. ground floor- hall and kitchen, 1st floor 5 rooms, bathroom, open balcony, capitolly repaired, gas, heating system, parking. Price: Negotiable.

- 1462. **Teryan str.**, 3 storied building, 800 sq.m., capitolly repaired, AC, parking. Price: 10.000 USD.

- 1945. **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/1, 2, 140sq.m., window glasses, capitolly repaired, AC. Price: 8000 USD

- 1943. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 265sq.m., 1st line, capitolly repaired, heating system, cellar. Price: 7000 USD

- 1868. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 220sq.m., 1st line, facade-55m., capitolly repaired, h-5m., cellar. Price: 15.000 USD.

- 2087. **Northern ave.**, Ground floor of the building, 100sq.m, 1st line, zero level, capitolly repaired, window glasses. Price: Negotiable.

- 2033. **Abovyan str.**, 388sq.m, Ground floor of the building, 3 degrees above zero level, window glasses, h-3m., basement-235sq.m., capitolly repaired, heating system, AC. Price: 15.000 USD

- 2031. **Vardanants str.**, 500sq.m, ground floor of the building, 2 entrances, facade-20m, window glasses, without divisions, ,basement-250sq.m, Price: 8000 USD

- 2027. **Sayat Nova str.**, 95sq.m, ground floor of the building, 2 entrances, 7 degrees above zero level, 4 window glasses, capitolly repaired. Price: 4.000 USD

## 3 ROOMS AND MORE

- 2277. **Kievyan str.** duplex, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitolly repaired, with or without furniture. Price: Negotiable.
- 2310 **Busand str.**, Newly built, 190sq.m, 3bedrooms, 3bathrooms, capitolly repaired, furnished,

# US election observers say Artsakh vote was fair, transparent

*Asbarez*

A delegation of United States election observers traveled to Artsakh in early May to closely observe what resulted in successful and democratic parliamentary elections.

The delegation was comprised of elected officials Andreas Borgeas from the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, Gail Pellerin the Santa Cruz County Clerk, experts Karin Mac Donald Director of the UC Berkeley Election Administration Research Center, Kristen Abajian from the UC Davis Human Rights Initiative and Peter Abajian from Paros Foundation, as well as Armenian National Committee of America - Western Region (ANCA WR) Board Member Nareg Kitsinian and Government Affairs Director Tereza Yerimyan.

"The electoral process in this Republic is fair and transparent," stated Nareg Kitsinian, Esq., board member of the ANCA-WR. "As election observers, we witnessed an organically high voter turnout as the citizens believe it is of paramount importance to the continued independence of the Republic that they fought for. As a testament to the Republic's commitment to the democratic process, this election was conducted with a distinguished level of integrity that would parallel any democratic country in the western world."

The traveling delegation also used the opportunity to meet with the government's leadership prior to the election to understand the methodology and process of the elections.

During a meeting with the Chairperson of the Central Electoral Commission, Srбуhi Arzumanyan, the U.S. observation team was able to understand the process of the election and the structure of the polling locations. Observers were particularly impressed by the number of poll workers required at each polling location. During a given election, there are nine poll workers assigned to a location and all must undergo seven days of training in order to qualify as a poll worker. The poll worker positions are not all stipend, rather, the people of Artsakh see this as an important part of their civic duty.

Following the meeting with Central Election Commission, the delegation had the honor of meeting with President Bako Sahakyan where they expressed their gratitude on being invited to observe the election and offer their guidance to further improve the process. The President expressed his and the people's willingness to hear their recommendation and further assured the observers that they would witness a transparent election.

The delegation also had the opportunity to meet with the Speaker of the Artsakh Parliament, Ashot Ghoulyan and Prime Minister Arayik Harutyunyan to get their perspective on how the election process had changed since the presidential election in 2012. During these meetings they also had the unique insight on how the role the political parties in the country played in affecting voter turnout.

Finally, in meetings with the Republic of Artsakh's Human Right's Defender, Yuri Hayrapetyan, observers voiced their concerns over accessibility issues for voters with disabilities. Mr. Hayrapetyan was open to their recommendations and concerns noting that the country is still in the process of making the polls more accessible to those who are physically handicapped.



In a preliminary report issued after the election, the University of California Election Observation and Technical Assistance Team described the elections as "a fair, accurate, and transparent election process."

As observers they also noted that women in Nagorno-Karabakh were equal participants in the elections in every aspect including participating as voters, poll workers, party representatives, government officials, and candidates. "I am impressed how Artsakh conducted its national elections consistent with international standards, I think there are lessons we in the U.S. can learn from them, especially in terms of voter turnout and civic engagement," commended Fresno County Supervisor Andreas Borgeas.

Santa Cruz County Clerk Gail Pellerin has offered to continue collaboration to develop the process of elections in the Republic, "I found the election in Nagorno-Karabakh to be fair, accurate, secure, and transparent. The commitment of the voters and poll workers would rival any country. The citizens of this democratic republic are very engaged as demonstrated by the 70.6% turnout in the May 3 election."

"As someone who has participated in elections in the United States as a poll worker, a member of a campaign, and as a candidate, I am impressed by the level of commitment the people of Artsakh have for their elections," noted ANCA-WR Government Affairs Director Tereza Yerimyan. "The level of dedication observed during these elections are representative of the strength of democracy and the commitment to sovereignty the people of Artsakh practice. We in the U.S. can learn from their example in better exercising our right to vote," she added.

According to NKR Central Election Commission, 70.6% of voters came out for the sixth parliamentary elections of the country, during which 33 members of parliament were either re-elected or newly elected for a ten-year term. Approximately one hundred and six international observers from 30 countries gathered in the Artsakh Republic to monitor the vote. Observers from the European Union, United States and countries like Zimbabwe and Israel were present. For the first time in Artsakh's election history, the elections were also observed by scholars and experts from Brazil and Mexico.



## Armenian Church leader speaks on suit to reclaim property seized by Turkey



A lawsuit in Turkey filed by the Armenian Church to recover its ancient headquarters, seized a century ago during the Armenian genocide, is the "first legal step" of a goal to reclaim all Armenian property seized by the Turks, His Holiness Aram I told The New York Times on May 18.

The leader, Aram I, Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia, also said that if the Turkish legal authorities rejected the lawsuit, it would "deepen the divide" between Turkey and the 10-million-member Armenian diaspora.

Aram I spoke in an interview at The New York Times while on a visit to diaspora communities in the Northeast after having participated in genocide centennial events in Washington.

He is a leading advocate of the effort to increase global recognition of the 1915-23 killings of 1.5 million Armenians by Ottoman Turks as a genocide, a description embraced by Pope Francis, the European Parliament and legislatures of more than 20 nations but angrily rejected by Turkey's government, which calls it a distortion of history.

Legislatures of many American states also have called the killings a genocide. The White House has yet to do so, but Aram I said, "I am sure President Obama, in his heart, knows that this was genocide."

On April 27, lawyers for the church filed a suit with the Constitutional Court

of Turkey asserting that the headquarters of the Catholicosate in Sis, part of the Kozan district in southern Turkey's Adana Province, was wrongly seized and should be returned.

The headquarters, which dates to 1293 and included a cathedral and monastery, was once the epicenter of Armenian Christian life. It was among the tens of thousands of Armenian properties commandeered and plundered during the last days of the Ottoman Empire and the scattering of Armenian survivors. The headquarters was re-established in 1930, in Antelias, Lebanon.

Aram I, who at 68 is the first Lebanese-born leader of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, said he had decided to proceed with a lawsuit after having consulted with 30 legal experts, including some from Turkey. While the church's efforts to achieve an international acknowledgment of the genocide were important, "after 100 years, I thought it was high time that we put the emphasis on reparation," he said.

"This is the headquarters of the church," he said. "This is the first legal step. That will be followed by our claim to return all the churches, the monasteries, the church-related properties and, finally, the individual properties. We should move step by step."

There has been, as yet, no response by the Constitutional Court to the suit,

and the Armenian Church leader speculated that its judges may be ignoring it. But the mayor of Kozan, Musa Ozturk, signaled within days of the suit that the church would have a fight on its hands.

"Not even an iota of land is to be handed over to anyone," Mr. Ozturk said in remarks quoted by Turkish news media. The mayor said the church had no proof of ownership.

Aram I acknowledged that the church did not have deeds, but said he considered that level of proof to be absurd considering the obvious nature of the properties. "The ownership is clear," he said. "They are Armenian. Nobody can question the ownership or identity or history of those properties."

The church's lead international lawyer in the suit, Payam Akhavan, a McGill University professor and legal expert on genocide issues, said in a recent telephone interview that he planned to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights if the Turkish court rejects it. Under the European convention on human rights, all domestic remedies must be exhausted before such a case could be heard.

Mr. Akhavan said the lawsuit had been carefully framed to avoid antagonizing the Turkish authorities over the genocide issue. "We have a property claim," he said. "We're not asking for recognition of the Armenian genocide. We have a very pragmatic claim."

Aram I said he had never been able to visit the ancient headquarters and feared that the local authorities had made efforts to erase its Armenian identity. He also expressed impatience with a view that the church's confrontational stance, as seen in the lawsuit, is inconsistent with the principle of forgiveness, a basic Christian value.

"Forgiveness comes when there is confession, repentance, acceptance of sin," he said. "Reconciliation is part of our human faith and values, but first of all, Turkey must reconcile with its own past."

## Armenia's European agenda remains a foreign policy priority: Serzh Sargsyan

President Serzh Sargsyan, who has paid a working visit to the Republic of Latvia, today took part in the European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders' Summit in Riga where he delivered a statement.

### Statement by the President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan at the meeting of the European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders

Distinguished President Daul,

Dear colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to thank President Daul for the invitation to partake in the meeting in this format and excellent organization of this meeting.

Mr. President,

Armenia's European agenda remains a foreign policy priority of ours, and we are committed to deepen and further consolidate our cooperation with the EU. The Eastern Partnership is not going through an easy time right now, but we do not think that it exhausted itself or it is doomed. Basically, the situation ought to be realistically assessed in order to continue anew the journey we embarked upon jointly in Prague. Indeed, the three Partners enjoy one kind of a relationship with the EU, while the rest - other, which stem from the peculiarities of their respective situations. Hence, one needs to fathom what is the pivot that connects the Partners and European Union in new circumstances? What around the cooperation will be built?

It is important to preserve the characteristic and common features, which unite us in the Partnership. We strongly believe that such a commonality shall remain rooted in the adherence of the all Partner States to shared values, such as development of democracy, human rights, rule of law, and ensuring peace and stability in the region. Therefore, our future cooperation shall continue to be rooted in our adherence, in good faith, to build and develop democratic societies and institutes, fight against corruption, conduct of free and fair elections, independence of judiciary, and establishment of a market economy based on free competition.

We, meanwhile, welcome that Towards New European Neighborhood Policy concept paper presented by the European Commission addresses the requirement to

take into account the real needs of the Partner States and to display tailor-made approaches, which indeed would contribute to discovering new avenues and perspectives for cooperation with the EU.

We are of the view that any given Partner's membership to any structure does not limit its cooperation with other structures. It is for that reason that Armenia, while acceding to the Eurasian Economic Union, continues to be committed to deepening and expanding relations with the EU.

With its balanced policy Armenia have avoided setting a new hotbed of tension in the current complicated circumstances of the European geopolitics; moreover, it has managed to build its policy on the premises of compatibility, equilibrium and multi-vectored cooperation with different integration systems.

These very principles will serve as a basis for the envisaged legal document to govern relations between Armenia and EU, for conclusion of which we count on your support.

Dear colleagues,

It has been for a long time that worrying developments in a Partner country, Ukraine, caused a serious crisis. Comprehensive settlement of the state of affairs in Ukraine is of primary significance both for the future of the country and relaxation of the current international tension. I hope that the farsighted attitude correctly appraising the situation will win over here as well; solutions will be found to respect mutual concerns, and the only stable avenue will be paved for mutual understanding; and, throughout every stage of these processes joint endeavors leading to comprehensive settlement will prevail over dissemination of one-sided fault-finding public statements, a temptation that leads nowhere. Unfortunately, I detect such signals also in the EPP declaration of today, on the several paragraphs of which we have not been able to reach consensus. In my view, the basic reason of that was that the EPP partners have not been fully engaged in the drafting exercise.

While discussing issues pertaining to ensuring cooperation and security in the European area, I cannot but address the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, which continues to be one of the most serious challenges both to our regional and European

security. Azerbaijan has not ceased resorting to its usual practice of provocations, threats and anti-Armenian propaganda, thus protracting the conflict settlement process. The anti-Armenian campaign in Azerbaijan is coupled with egregious human rights violations, and it has been a while that the opponents to the regime are labeled as Armenian spying agents.

The irresponsible steps of Azerbaijan, which threaten the security of the region we share, shall not go unnoticed by our European partners. Those steps deserve adequate assessment. Hence, I urge not to drift with the current generated by Azerbaijan in various international platforms, and by that avoid sharing responsibility with the latter for increasing tension in our region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Availing myself of this opportunity, I again express gratitude to the EPP Political Assembly for adopting Resolution dedicated to the Armenian Genocide Centennial on March 3, 2015 titled "The Armenian Genocide and European Values." I highly value contribution of the EPP and President Daul in person to the adoption of the April 15 Resolution condemning the Armenian Genocide by the European Parliament, which testifies unambiguous position and commitment to the universal values of the European family of nations. Je vous remercie, Monsieur Daul, for accepting my invitation to Yerevan, for joining us to deliver globally message "Never again."

Dear colleagues,

Throughout the recent months our European agenda had been intensive with a number of events. Among those I shall pick out the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Eastern Partnership EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly held in March in Yerevan, as well as the Ministerial Summit of the European Higher Education Area also known as Bologna process that took place last week.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Republican Party of Armenia highly values its close cooperation with the EPP, and we clearly see that it bear fruit. In this context, I highly value the RPA's youth organization's accession to the EPP youth organization.

I thank you.



## US Lawmakers Violated Laws, Taking Trips to Azerbaijan and Turkey



*By Harut  
Sassounian*

*Publisher, The  
California Courier*

In a lengthy article titled, "10 members of Congress took trip secretly funded by foreign government," The Washington Post disclosed last week the scandalous details of an all-expenses paid trip to a conference in Azerbaijan by 10 lawmakers and 32 staff members in 2013. Former top aides to Pres. Obama - Robert Gibbs, Jim Messina and David Plough - also attended the conference as guest speakers.

The organizer of the international oil gathering in Baku, SOCAR, the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic, funneled \$750,000 through two U.S. nonprofit organizations "to conceal the source of the funding" for the trip, according to a confidential Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) report obtained by The Washington Post. Another \$750,000 was contributed by British Petroleum, ConocoPhillips and KBR for airfare, hotel and gifts.

The newspaper also reported that "shortly before the May 28-29, 2013 conference, SOCAR and several large energy companies [including the National Iranian Oil Company] sought exemptions for a \$28 billion natural gas pipeline in the Caspian Sea from U.S. economic sanctions being imposed on Iran." In fact, a month before the conference, SOCAR established the nonprofit Assembly of the Friends of Azerbaijan (AFAZ) in Houston by transferring \$750,000. The second nonprofit involved in the scheme, also based in Houston, was the Turquoise Council of Americans and Eurasians (TCAE). Both nonprofits, headed by Kemal Oksuz, shared the same Houston address. Congress approved several bills sanctioning Iran, while exempting the SOCAR project. Pres. Obama then signed these bills into law.

The ten members of Congress who went on the Baku junket were: Jim Bridenstine (R-OK), Yvette Clarke (D-NY), Danny Davis (D-IL), Michelle Grisham (D-NM), Ruben Hinojosa (D-TX), Leonard Lance (R-NJ), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Gregory Meeks (D-NY), Ted Poe (R-TX), and Steve Stockman (R-TX).

Ethics investigators disclosed that these lawmakers, accompanied by spouses and fiancés, received several gifts, including "crystal tea sets, briefcases, silk scarves, turquoise earrings, gold-painted plates and Azerbaijani rugs.... All lawmakers received at least one rug and some got two, one prayer-size and one area rug. Many staff members also received rugs."

To justify their illegal or improper actions, some of these lawmakers made ridiculous statements to congressional investigators:

- Cong. Davis stated that during the Baku conference he "received one rug which was delivered to his hotel room." He said he was thinking about donating the rug to a museum or charity!

- Cong. Hinojosa claimed: "I received souvenirs of what I believed to be of minimal value and in compliance with the House Gift rule."

- Ladan Ahmadi, spokeswoman for Rep. Meeks, stated that the Congressman "understood the rug to be a permissible courtesy gift."

- A senior staff member of Rep. Lance told The Washington Post that the Congressman "returned the one rug he received after he got back to Washington. The staff member also said Lance received a pair of earrings and reimbursed the nonprofit group that helped organize the conference \$100 immediately upon returning to New Jersey."

- Cong. Grisham told ethics investigators that she did not disclose the rugs because she did not think they were particularly valuable. She also thought they were

unattractive: "It's not a carpet I would have purchased."

- Cong. Bridenstine was the only lawmaker who disclosed the rugs on his financial report. "He had them appraised: the smaller rug at \$2,500 and the larger at \$3,500."

Quoting from the ethics report, The Washington Post revealed that Reps. Clarke, Grisham, Hinojosa, Lance, and their staff members also "took side trips to Turkey, traveling to Istanbul, Ankara or both.... The Bosphorus Atlantic Cultural Association of Friendship and Cooperation, a Turkish nonprofit organization, covered the expenses, the report said. The lawmakers did not disclose the role of that nonprofit."

The Office of Congressional Ethics concluded that "SOCAR and AFAZ provided gifts in the form of impermissible travel expenses to congressional travelers in violation of House rules, regulations and federal law," while "members of Congress who traveled to Turkey accepted payment of travel expenses from impermissible sources, resulting in an impermissible gift, in violation of House rules and regulations." Furthermore, the investigators reported that five nonprofits affiliated with the Azerbaijani government asserted that they sponsored the conference, filing sworn statements with the Ethics Committee in April and May 2013. "The five sponsoring organizations contributed no funding for the congressional travel in spite of false affirmations on the forms they submitted to the Committee on Ethics." The Washington Post reported that these findings have been referred to the House Ethics Committee for investigation of possible violation of congressional rules and federal laws that bar foreign governments from trying to influence U.S. policy.

It is deeply troubling that members of Congress are willing to sell their souls to corrupt Azerbaijani and Turkish entities for a free rug!

## Hayastan All-Armenian Fund begins annual project-site visits in Armenia and Artsakh

Within the framework of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund Board of Trustees' annual meeting in Yerevan, a delegation led by Executive Director Ara Vardanyan and comprising trustees, representatives of affiliates worldwide, benefactors, and associates began a string of project-site visits and opening ceremonies of newly completed projects in Artsakh and Armenia. The events, which were kicked off in Artsakh on May 20, will continue through May 25.

The delegation traveled to Artsakh via the Vardenis-Martakert Highway. A large-scale construction project, the highway will be fully paved this year, as planned for the second phase of implementation.

On May 21, the delegation held opening ceremonies for the newly built community centers of Patara and Khantsk, villages in the Askeran Region. The construction of Patara's community center was made possible by the financial support of the fund's French affiliate, with additional support from the government of Artsakh. The two-story community center houses the mayor's office, a medical clinic, a library, and a computer room, with an adjacent events hall. Currently the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund is building additional community centers and schools in Artsakh with the sponsorship of the French-Armenian community.

The construction of the Khantsk community center was co-sponsored by the fund's Montreal affiliate and the government of Artsakh. Also a two-story, multifunctional structure, the



Khantsk community center houses the mayor's office, a health clinic, a library, a computer room, and a game room, as well as an adjacent events hall with a seating capacity of 150.

The community centers of Patara and Khantsk, like scores of other similar structures built by the fund across Armenia and Artsakh, are breathing new life into towns and villages, by addressing many core community needs.

Following the Khantsk event, the delegation visited the village of Ivanyan, in the Askeran Region, where the fund is building a kindergarten with the co-sponsorship of the Toronto affiliate and the government of Artsakh. The approximately 420-square-meter kindergarten is designed to accommodate up to 70 children. With sponsorship of Toronto-Armenians also a community center is being constructed next to the kindergarten.

On the evening of May 21, the delegation will attend a concert at Stepanaker's Sayat Nova music college. The concert is organized by the college in honor of the guests.

The Sayat Nova music college, which recently underwent a complete renovation with the support of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund, hosts different educational and cultural events. Last year it hosted a visit by world-renowned soprano Montserrat Caballe who also gave a concert in Stepanakert.





## Caucasus, Central Asia feel impact of adverse shocks: IMF



Growth in the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) is expected to decline by 2 percent this year as a result of lower commodity prices and the economic slowdown in Russia, says the latest regional forecast by IMF staff.

The Regional Economic Outlook Update for the Caucasus and Central Asia, released on May 19, predicts growth in the region will reach just over 3 percent this year (see table). This latest forecast represents a downward revision of 2½ percentage points from the one released by the IMF in October 2014.

"The twin shocks of the economic slowdown in Russia, a key trading partner, and lower oil prices are taking a toll on the region," Juha Kähkönen, Deputy Director of the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia Department told reporters in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

"Exchange rate developments—such as the appreciation of the U.S. dollar and the depreciation of the ruble—are compounding the problem. Overall, the outlook for the region has not been this weak since the global financial crisis in 2008-09."

Oil exporters use cushions to soften impact of oil price shock

The CCA's oil and gas exporters—Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—should see growth decline to 3½ percent in 2015 from 5½ percent last year. In some of these countries, the impact from lower oil prices and Russia's contraction is being amplified by

a slowdown in domestic oil production and delays in development of new oil fields, the IMF report says (see Chart 1).

The oil and gas exporters' external position is set to weaken sharply in 2015. The current account balance is expected to turn from a surplus of 3 percent of GCP in 2014 to a deficit of 2½ percent in 2015, reflecting both oil export revenue losses and stronger import growth.

The drop in oil prices is also having a budgetary impact. Some of the region's oil and gas exporters—such as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan—are dipping into the large reserves built up in recent years to blunt the impact of the oil price shock. As a result, the oil and gas exporters' fiscal balance is shifting from a surplus of about 1½ percent in 2014 to a deficit of close to three percent in 2015, according to the report.

Given that many of the oil and gas exporters cannot balance their budgets at currently projected prices, the IMF says these countries should consider taking steps toward fiscal consolidation as soon as conditions allow, to rebuild buffers, strengthen fiscal sustainability, and share the natural resource wealth with future generations.

Oil importers feel strain of lower remittances

In the CCA's oil importers—Armenia, Georgia, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan—growth will slow to 1½ percent this year, the report says. These countries

are heavily dependent on remittances from Russia, which have fallen sharply. The drop in remittances has erased any gains from lower oil prices, and the current account deficit for these countries is expected to reach 11 percent this year, the IMF says.

These countries are also experiencing a reduction in export revenues as a result of lower commodity prices in general, as many of them export minerals such as gold, copper, and aluminum.

The oil importers will see a rise in their fiscal deficits, from just over 2 percent in 2014 to about 4½ percent in 2015. While some countries, such as Armenia and the Kyrgyz Republic, are temporarily increasing spending to boost domestic demand, all the oil importers will need to return to fiscal consolidation soon in order to preserve their long-term fiscal health, the report emphasizes.

Financial sector vigilance, structural reforms needed

Across the region, the current economic environment in the CCA is proving difficult for banks, as financial systems are facing pressures from multiple sources. Currency depreciations are increasing credit and solvency risks—especially in the context of dollarized banking systems and foreign currency lending. And the region's slowing economic growth is heightening credit risks, particularly in countries where bank governance and underwriting standards are weak.

Because of these risks, banking supervisors will need to intensify surveillance of financial systems in the region, the IMF report says, and crisis management frameworks should be strengthened.

The report also suggests that greater exchange rate flexibility would be needed to help the region's economies absorb shocks, retain competitiveness in the face of exchange rate pressures, and prevent a drain on reserves (see Chart 2).

As for the region's medium-term prospects, bold structural reforms will be vital. Policymakers should intensify efforts to enhance the business environment, improve governance, and diversify economies away from their reliance on commodity exports and remittances, the IMF says.

## Fortune smiles on cellist from Armenia, and she appreciates it all: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As part of the Odysseys project through which the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette is trying to track immigrants from 193 countries in the United Nations, folks who made Pittsburgh their home, the paper has dedicated an article to Armenian cellist Katya Janpoladyan.

Tony Norman

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

When Katya Janpoladyan says she never takes anything for granted, it is easy to believe why. At 37, the cello player from Yerevan, Armenia, knows what it is like to experience the deprivations of life in a blockaded country.

In 1988, Azerbaijan established a land blockade around Armenia because of ancient political and territorial disputes. Turkey, which shares a border as well as a tragic history with Armenia, also erected a blockade, intensifying the country's isolation.

There is only a hint of melancholy in Ms. Janpoladyan's voice as she recalls her youth during the blockade. She was 10 or 11 when she began to understand that her biggest passion in life was music, though she had not yet mastered an instrument.

Unlike most children facing many years of practice and self-imposed discipline, Ms. Janpoladyan had to beg her parents - both of whom are journalists - to let her take music lessons. Her Armenian father and Russian mother wanted to make sure her request wasn't a momentary bout of enthusiasm, so they didn't acquiesce immediately.

By the time she was 11, Ms. Janpoladyan suspected she was "too old" for piano lessons, so she started to narrow her choice of instruments. It was only when she heard a student playing a Haydn concerto under the supervision of her future music teacher that she found her life-long companion.

"This is how it started," Ms. Janpoladyan said, recalling the moment decades later.

From that point, mastering the cello became her priority. She put in years of disciplined practice under difficult circumstances and sacrificed many of the few comforts that were available to her to pursue her dream.

"I missed my prom to get ready for an audition," she said, "but I never regretted it."

She remembers the multiple layers of clothing she had to wear in her unheated conservatory. But the chilly conditions under which she had to rehearse didn't prevent her from winning awards or progressing steadily in her mastery of the cello.

During the blockade, her father was a communications officer, so he wasn't home a lot. "It was difficult," Ms. Janpoladyan said. "There was no heat in the house. Because my father was at work, there was no provider. My mom, brother and grandma couldn't cut the trees [for fire wood], so we collected branches."

Meanwhile, Ms. Janpoladyan began thinking about leaving Armenia to pursue her art and to live a life that was a little less defined by blockades and ancient conflicts.

A plan to study in St. Petersburg, Russia, fell through, but an opportunity to study with cellist Yehuda Hanani in Cincinnati opened up new possibilities.



In late 2001, Ms. Janpoladyan moved to the United States to attend the University of Cincinnati and to study with Mr. Hanani, who became her mentor and friend.

After completing her master's degree, Ms. Janpoladyan moved to Pittsburgh in 2008. "I moved here to work with my string quartet," she said referring to the Freya String Quartet, which formed in 2009.

The quartet recently announced it would soon disband so its members could pursue new opportunities. It specialized in the work of new composers. Ms. Janpoladyan enjoyed the challenge and the opportunity.

"We do a ton of music by new composers. Some of it is really great," she said.

Ms. Janpoladyan is about to begin a new musical project, but doesn't want to talk about it yet because it is in the early stages. It will be in Pittsburgh, a region that continues to inspire her creativity.

Still, Ms. Janpoladyan's initial encounter with the region wasn't love at first sight. "It takes time to fall in love with Pittsburgh, but I did," she said. "I love the bridges, the cultural life ... a lot is going on here."

In what could be a first, Ms. Janpoladyan said she "even likes the rain" in Pittsburgh. Now a resident of McCandless, she teaches cello privately to 30 students.

"I like molding and bringing students to perfection," she said. "I try to create a community with my students so that they know each other and don't feel isolated."

Ms. Janpoladyan has a 2-year-old daughter named Maria. Not too long ago, she took Maria to Armenia to introduce her to her family. It was a joyful reunion and she enjoyed seeing her family bond with her daughter.

Looking back on her life in Armenia and contrasting it with her life in Pittsburgh, Ms. Janpoladyan is philosophical.

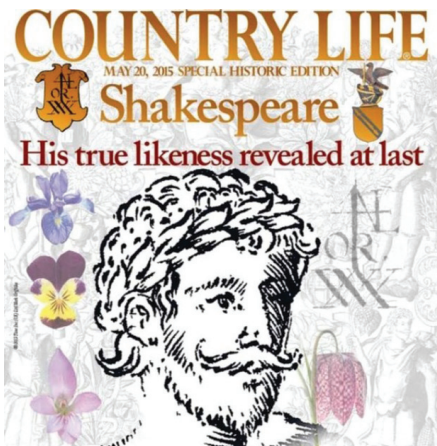
"I'm glad I went through that," she said referring to the blockade. "It taught me not to take things for granted."

She ticked down the things she has, including her daughter, her health, food, warm clothing, a car, an income that she refuses to treat as entitlements.

"I'm a lucky person in general," she said. "Fortune smiles on me."



## 'True face of Shakespeare' appears in botany book



A 400-year-old botany book contains what could be the only known portrait of Shakespeare made in his lifetime, according to an academic expert, the BBC reports.

Botanist and historian Mark Griffiths cracked an "ingenious cipher" to identify the playwright in an engraving in the 16th-Century work.

"This is what Shakespeare looked like, drawn from life and in the prime of life," he said.

Details of his discovery are revealed in

this week's issue of Country Life.

Mark Hedges, the magazine's editor, hailed it as "the literary discovery of the century".

Speaking at London's Rose Playhouse, he said the Shakespeare portrait was the "only known verifiable portrait of the world's greatest writer in his lifetime".

He added that the engraving showed the Bard aged 33 and "in his prime".

"He's written *Midsummer Night's Dream* and he's shortly to write *Hamlet*. He has a film star's good looks."

## Armenia to participate in leading American book fair

Armenia will take part in the leading book and author event for the North American publishing industry, Book Expo America (BEA), for the first time, Asbarez reports.

BEA combines the largest selection of English language titles and is the largest gathering of booksellers, librarians, retailers, and book industry professionals in North America. This year BEA has more than 2,000 exhibits, 500 authors, and over 60 conference sessions.

BEA's conference program will begin at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, May 27, with the show floor opening at 1 p.m. and closing at 5:30 p.m. In addition to Wednesday afternoon, the exhibit floor will be open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. On Thursday, May 28, and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, May 29.

BEA 2015 welcomes China as the global market forum Guest of Honor. Global Market Forum is part of the BEA Content & Digital Conference and is open to all BEA. Its delegation will include more than 100 of the most important Chinese publishing houses and groups attendees. China will hold a series of panels at which participants will discuss the Chinese publishing market and explore ways publishers can work with Chinese companies.

The Armenian Pavilion in BEA will showcase the Armenian culture and heritage through books and writings, which form part of a long standing tradition and culture.

Books published recently in Armenia and abroad will be represented in the Armenian pavilion. Publishers and booksellers from Armenia will participate in the pavilion. A great importance will be given to the books on the Armenian Genocide published all over the world.

The opening of the Armenian Pavilion in BEA will be on the 27th of May at 3:00 p.m.

During the opening there will be presentations of books and readings by Matthew Karanian, Scout Tufankjian, Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte, Dana Walroth, Nancy Kricorian, Marian Mesrobian MacCurdy and Sona Van.

Ambassador of Armenia to the U.S., Tigran Sargsyan, will attend the book exhibition as well.

The participation in BookExpo America is supported by the State Commission on Coordination of the events for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

**WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?****Enjoy your leisure****19 May**

**19:00.** Yearning. Directed by: Grigor Babayan. Play recovered by: Narine Malyan. Play | H. Malyan Theater of Film Actors

**19:00.** Gala Soprano. Opera and Ballet Theater Symphony Orchestra. Conductor: Harutyun Arzumanyan. Concert | National Academic Theater of Opera and Ballet after A. Spendiarian

**19:00.** Clown Macbeth. Play | Yerevan State Pantomime Theater

**19:00.** Anush. Author: H. Tumanyan. Director: Davit Hakobyan. Play | State Musical Chamber Theater

**19:00.** Glamorous Chobans. Transparent comedy. Author: Armen Vardanyan. Director: Karo Balyan. Play | State Theater of Musical Comedy after H. Paronyan

**19:30.** Predators' Feast. Psychological drama in 1 act. Director: Ashot Hakobyan. Play | Student Theater

**20 May**

**14:00, 16:00.** The Third. Author: Boris Aprilov. Director/Producer: Ruben Babayan. Play for kids | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**19:00.** Pro Semiramis. Dance show for adults. Play | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**19:00.** Glamorous Chobans. Transparent comedy. Author: Armen Vardanyan. Director: Karo Balyan. Play | State Theater of Musical Comedy after H. Paronyan

**20:00.** Dark SHOCKolate. A play with an intermission to think over who is right: the man or the woman. Staging: Suren Shahverdyan. Play | Yerevan Drama Theater after H. Ghaplanyan

**21 May**

**19:00.** Flowers Manuscript. Mimodrama in 1 act. Author and

Director: Zhirayr Dadasyan. Play | Yerevan State Pantomime Theater

**19:00.** Lorkiana - Carmen-Suite. Ballet | National Academic Theater of Opera and Ballet after A. Spendiarian

**19:00.** Royal Concert. Musical-amusing show. Author and director of the play - Ara Yernjakyan. Play | Yerevan State Chamber Theater

**19:00.** Khanuma. A. Tsagareli. Play | Russian Drama Theater after K. Stanislavski

**22 May**

**19:00.** Like Gods. Premiere. Yuri Polyakov. Play | Russian Drama Theater after K. Stanislavski

**19:00.** Marriage. Genre: Comedy. Author: N. Gogol. Staging: Vahan Khachatryan. Play | H. Malyan Theater of Film Actors

**19:00.** Romantic Comedy. B. Slade. Tragicomedy in 2 acts. Play | Yerevan Drama Theater after H. Ghaplanyan

**19:00.** The Maxims of Pantelei Karmanov. Viripaev. Play | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**19:00.** Yerevan-Barcelona. Comedy. Play | M. Mkrtchyan Artistic Theater

**23 May**

**12:00, 14:00.** Goldfish. Play for kids | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**12:30, 14:00, 15:30.** Brothers Grimm. Staging: Lily Elbakyan. Play for kids | State Marionette Theater

**14:00.** Cinderella. Author: Charles Perrault. Staged by: A. Miridjanyan. Play for kids | State Musical Chamber Theater

**15:00.** The Adventures of Chipollino. Based on Gianni Rodari's tale, "Chippolino's adventures". Play for kids | M. Mkrtchyan Artistic Theater

**16:00, 18:00.** Based on Hovhannes Tumanyan's tale. Play for kids | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**19:00.** Paris Verdict. P. Zeytuntsyan. Drama in 2 acts. Play | Yerevan Drama Theater after H. Ghaplanyan

**19:00.** Irina Allegrova. Encore... Concert | Sports & Concert Complex after K. Demirchyan

**19:00.** Mrs. Ministress. Comedy in 2 acts. Play | State Theater of Musical Comedy after H. Paronyan

**19:00.** Coma Nostra. New performance dedicated to the author's 55th anniversary. Play | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**19:00.** Compensation. Pessimistic Comedy. Dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Play | Yerevan State Chamber Theater

**24 May**

**12:00, 14:00.** Three Piglets. Author: Ervand Manaryan.

Director/Producer: Ruben Babayan. Play for kids | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**12:30, 14:00, 15:30.** Gndlik-Bokonik (Gingerbread Man). Play for kids | State Marionette Theater

**14:00.** Tom & Jerry. Children's Musical Fun Show. Staging: Artur Saribekyan. Play for kids | State Musical Chamber Theater

**17:00.** The New Adventures of The Three Piglets. Directed by Samson Stepanyan. Musical | State Musical Chamber Theater

**18:00.** A Tale from the Clouds. Z. Antonyan. Play for kids | State Puppet Theater after H. Tumanyan

**19:00.** You Can't Get Rid Of Me. Comedy in 2 acts. Play | State Theater of Musical Comedy after H. Paronyan

**19:00.** Hollywood... Hollywood. N. Simon. Comedy in 2 acts. Play | Yerevan Drama Theater after H. Ghaplanyan

**19:00.** Getting Married Is Not Easy. Comedy in 1 act. Staged by Mher Mkrtchyan. Play | M. Mkrtchyan Artistic Theater



## Zodiac Weekly Forecast

### Aries (Mar. 20--Apr. 19) :

This week could be hard on your business and personal relationships. Everyone wants a piece of you and the challenges may cause you to want to vaporize. New initiatives that you have wanted to put in place will probably encounter one or more bureaucratic rules. Given Mercury is retrograde, it is probably better to start again at a later time.

### Taurus (Apr. 20--May 19):

Make note of the lead paragraph because Venus is your avatar planet. She can create trouble if you give attention to gossip. If you speak, tell the truth or say nothing at all. Give close attention to your driving. You are subject to accident but can avoid it by staying alert.

### Gemini (May 20 -- June 20) :

You may think better of previous initiatives. Therefore you may be backtracking to correct what you now see as errors in judgment or speech. Irritability and a tendency to short temper may be your companions this week. Beware the temptation to obsess over minor issues.

### Cancer (June 21--July 21) :

It probably will seem as though people and politics just won't allow you to remain curled in your cozy shell this week. Intensity is the theme of the week. If you are not conscious, you could be pulled into schemes of manipulation or compulsive behaviors. Avoid the "drama triangle" (see lead paragraph) by refusing to play.

### Leo (July 22 --Aug. 21):

This is a week of scrutiny. It is possible that you are being tested now. You will get what you deserve. If you have prepared well, you will win the prize or the honor. You may have begun a challenging project during the fall which is now ready for unveiling and evaluation.

### Virgo (Aug 22--Sep. 22) :

Ignore the water cooler talk. People just want to gossip this week. In general they are agitated and want you to join the bandwagon. This wastes a lot of energy. If you stick to business you will accomplish quite a lot. Organizing your home or work space will be fruitful now.

### Libra (Sep. 23--Oct. 22)

The people you attract around you may be pushing your buttons from old history. Make every effort to recognize the level of your intensity. If it is high, probably the original problem is in the past rather than the present. Holding onto that perception may help you keep your balance.

### Scorpio (Oct. 23--Nov. 21) :

Beware of gossip. Do not participate in any way. There is a lie at the bottom of whatever gossip comes across your path. Don't make rash moves or decisions over the next two weeks. You need time to think things through. It's a challenge for you to "see" yourself into the future with accuracy at this time. Seek out information in order to make good choices next month.

### Sagittarius (Nov. 22 --Dec. 20):

This is not one of your best weeks. Circumstances and situations seem to be holding you in place with no options to move forward or advance your cause. It will be easier on your psyche if you accept this position for the present. Fire signs dislike being in a holding pattern, but here you are until June.

### Capricorn (Dec 21 -- Jan 19) :

This is not the time to seek favors or special requests from the Powers That Be. And you are not likely to be long on lenience if someone requests help or a donation from you. Your attitude is practical and straightforward. He or she who asks had best truly deserve the gain or the privilege.

### Aquarius (Jan. 20--Feb. 17) :

Last fall you began a new project in relation to your work in the world. You knew it would take some time to develop, but you felt it was worth the effort. During this period you will have feedback from the world on the value of that idea. Ignore self-criticism, which is almost always unfair to you.

### Pisces (Feb. 18--Mar. 19) :

Your attitude about yourself is not altogether accurate right now. You may think way too much of your ideas, or alternately, you may see yourself as lower than scum. Neither is accurate and you should probably not make decisions of any importance this week. Spiritual pursuits are given a "go" signal.

## ARMENIAN POETRY

### Paruyr Sevak

#### The Advice

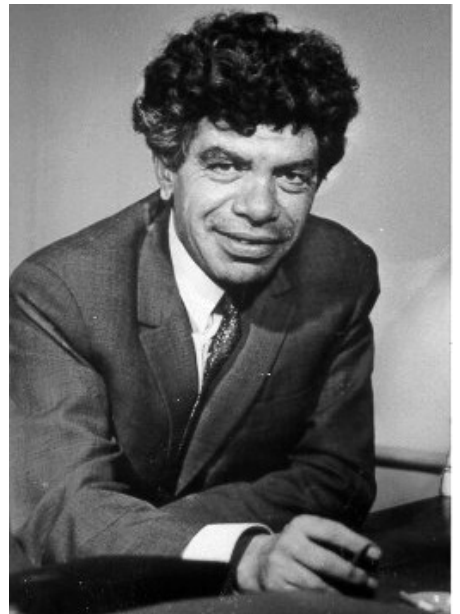
Welcome in  
that knocker at your door.  
His name is Doubt.  
Welcome him in and don't be afraid.  
I let him in years ago.  
And even let him out.

Welcome him in with rituals  
and ceremonies  
new greetings and old-fashioned enthusiasm  
that burns a bonfire in your breast  
so that if suspicion cannot be entirely  
extinguished, at least the darkness  
in your soul is split.

Welcome him for now.  
(I sent him away long ago.)

Welcome in Doubt. Welcome in  
Questioning.  
But don't imagine that I am either his  
agent  
or his prophet.  
I am just an old convert, that's all.  
But welcome him in.

It's Faith that's missing in this company  
not doctrines. Welcome Doubt in.  
It's Faith we wait for, not dogma.



## Famous doctor and clown Patch Adams visits Armenia

Famous doctor and clown Patch Adams is visiting Armenia. Adams and his fellow doctor-clowns visit about 10 countries a year to organize performances in hospitals, orphanages and retirement homes.

Patch Adams believes that laughter, joy and creativity are an integral part of the healing process; they strengthen the immune system, promotes the production of endorphin. With the help of friends, he founded the Gesundheit Institute in 1971 in order to address all the problems of health care in one model.

Many know about Adams from a 1998 film, featuring Oscar-winning actor Robin Williams.

Within the framework of a week-long stay in Armenia, Patch Adams and his team will visit the orphanages in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor and Dilijan, as well as children's hospitals to present a unique program famous in the world.

"Unfortunately, it's hard to find a normal person in a world, where the authorities and money have become ultimate values, while love and laughter are dan-



gerous phenomena.

For example, in the US keeping the public in unhappiness, loneliness and boredom is the best means to control the society," Adams told a press conference in Yerevan.

"Remember that happiness and unhappiness are just means to control the population. It's no accident that the most beautiful thing in the world - love - is never praised anywhere. At last, it's hard to control loving people, controlling unhappy people is much easier," he added.

Asked what percentage of people he thinks are happy, Patch Adams said "just 5."





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