

## Armenian, Azeri FMs in fresh talks on Karabakh



The Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan Edward Nalbandian and Elmar Mammadyarov held a meeting in Brussels upon the initiative of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group Igor Popov (Russia), Stephane Visconti (France) and Richard Hoagland (the US). The meeting was also attended by Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk.

“The parties continued discussions on the creating conditions conducive to furthering the negotiation process on the settlement of the Karabakh conflict,” the Armenian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Minister Nalbandian emphasized the need to stabilize the situation

along the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh. He pointed to the need to implement the agreements reached at the Vienna and St. Petersburg summits.

“The Co-Chairs asked the Ministers to convey to the Presidents their proposal on organizing a Summit in the course of this year,” the statement added.

An agreement was reached to convene the next meeting between the Foreign Ministers in September in New York in the margins of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

*see page 3*

**Artsakh Parliament  
set to elect President  
on July 19**

p.2

**First buckwheat  
processing factory  
to open in Armenia**

p.6

**The 201<sup>st</sup> Anniversary  
of the Independence  
of the Argentine  
Republic Celebrated  
in Yerevan**

p.11

**Zvartnots Cathedral:  
“A Serene and  
Beautiful Example  
of an Ancient  
Cathedral”** p.p.14-15

## President Sargsyan visits French Embassy on National Day of France

On the eve of the French Republic's National Day, President Serzh Sargsyan visited the Embassy of France in Armenia. The President offered his congratulations and best wishes to Ambassador Jean-Francois Charpenter, the embassy staff and the friendly people of France.

Taking the opportunity to reaffirm that France is seen as a friendly country for the Armenian people, as well as a reliable and good partner for Armenia, the President assured that our country will continue to strengthen bilateral relations and deepen the friendship between the Armenian and French peoples. President Sargsyan asked Ambassador Charpenter to convey his warm greetings to President Emmanuel Macron of France.

As they looked at ways of expanding and deepening bilateral relations in different fields of activity, the President of Armenia and the French Ambassador highlighted the need for close cooperation ahead of the Francophonie Summit to be held in Armenia. Ambassador Jean-Francois Charpentier thanked President Sargsyan for the visit to the Embassy, as well as for his congratulatory remarks and good wishes.

On the occasion of the National Day of France, President Serzh Sargsyan sent a congratulatory message to President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron.



The message reads:

"The centuries-old friendship between Armenia and France and the privileged relationship between our two countries, including the high-level political dialogue and the wealth of mutual trust provide a solid groundwork for the furtherance of the Armenian-French cooperation. I am confident that through joint effort we will be able to build on the ties in both bilateral and multilateral formats to the benefit of our two peoples.

Armenia highly values the efforts made by France jointly with Russia and the United States to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group for the sake of peace and stability in our region.

I very much appreciate France's support for rapprochement between Armenia and the European family, as well as the close ties of cooperation maintained in the international arena, including our interaction in the framework of La Francophonie.

Reiterating my congratulations, I wish every success and all the best to you, as well as progress and prosperity to the friendly people of France," President Serzh Sargsyan said in his congratulatory message addressed to the President of the French Republic."

## Artsakh Parliament set to elect President on July 19



Artsakh Parliament is set to elect the President of the Republic on July 19. The outcome is highly predictable, considering that three of the five parties represented in the National Assembly support incumbent

President Bako Sahakyan.

The "Free Motherland," Democratic Party and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaktsutyun say Bako Sahakyan should hold office in the transition period until the new Constitution comes into force in 2020.

The three parties hold 27 mandates in the 33-seat parliament. Arsen Arstamyan – the only independent MP represented in Artsakh's legislature – has also voiced support for Bako Sahakyan.

Despite this, the elections in Artsakh will be competitive, as "Movement 88" Party, which holds three seats in the National Assembly, has nominated the Party's President Edward Aghabekyan.

As a presidential nominee, Aghabekyan is going to avail himself of the opportunity to speak about threats and everyday issues facing Artsakh. The candidates will have just one hour to present their views at a parliament sitting.

After the transition period the President and Parliament of Artsakh will be elected in simultaneous elections in 2020.



## Sargsyan “satisfied” with Armenian military arsenal



(Yerevan – RFE/RL) President Serzh Sargsyan has insisted that the Armenian military has enough modern armaments to cope with security threats to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Meeting with military personnel, government officials and public figures in the resort town of Dilijan on July 13, Sargsyan clarified his controversial 2016 remark that Armenian soldiers are “fighting with weapons from the 1980s.”

“Firstly, the context [of the statement] was a bit different,” he said in televised remarks publicized by his office on July 14. “Secondly, there is not a single army in the world that possesses all modern types of weaponry. Neither the American army nor the Russian army nor any other army can claim to have all the modern weapons because no army, no state can gain them [at once.]”

“But every army needs to have sufficient weaponry in order to be able to accomplish its tasks. That is evaluated in its entirety. On top of that are soldiers’ skills. Today our army possesses not the most advanced armaments ... but sufficient weaponry and ammunition to

achieve objectives set for it.”

“A sufficient quantity and quality of weapons and ammunition plus intelligent and resilient fighters: this is the formula for success which I don’t doubt,” added Sargsyan. He did not disclose news types of weapons which Armenia has acquired in recent months.

Two years ago, Russia allocated a \$200 million loan to Armenia which is being spent on the purchase of more Russian weapons at internal Russian prices that are below market-based levels. The Russian government subsequently publicized a long list of items which the Armenian side is allowed to buy with that money. It includes, among other things, the Smerch multiple-launch rocket system, TOS-1A heavy flamethrowers, anti-tank weapons and shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles.

The arms supplies envisaged by the loan agreement appear to have begun last year. According to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Russia delivered 300 air-defense systems to Armenia in 2016. Those most probably were shoulder-fired Igla and Verba systems.

In late 2015 or early 2016, the Armenian military also acquired advanced Russian Iskander missiles. The acquisition was apparently not covered by the low-interest Russian credit.

Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan said in January that Yerevan is planning more arms acquisitions in addition to the \$200 million defense contracts signed with Moscow. He gave no details.

Russia has long been Armenia’s number one arms supplier, reflecting close military ties between the two states. Membership in the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) has enabled Armenia to receive Russian weapons at discounted prices or even for free.

## President pays working visit to Tavush Marz

President of the Republic of Armenia, Supreme Commander-in-Chief of RA Armed Forces Serzh Sargsyan traveled to Tavush Marz on a working visit this morning.

The President called at one of the combat positions in the north-eastern frontline zone, toured the military stronghold inspecting servicemen’s living conditions and combat training status, as well as the engineering and defensive facilities in place.

The Head of State handed gifts to a group of officers and soldiers who had excelled in service with outstanding dedication and courage. Offering his vote of thanks to the defenders of the Motherland, the President wished them every success and good service, stressing that their conscientious service was highly appreciated, since thanks to them, our people could live, work and develop our Motherland peacefully.

President Sargsyan next attended the ceremonious opening of a new complex of permanent deployment of the military unit in Idjevan. The event was addressed by the Minister of Defense, the commander of the military unit, the spiritual leader of the



Armed Forces and one of the soldiers.

After a solemn march dedicated to the opening of the newly built military town, the President of the Republic toured the barracks with a view to getting acquainted with the amenities. Serzh Sargsyan talked to the staff and joined the soldiers and of-

ficers for a dinner held in the soldiers’ canteen.

On the same day, the President gave an interview for Armenia TV Company’s R-Evolution program in the “Mountainous Armenia” health resort of the Ministry of Defense in Dilijan.

## Edward Sharmazanov rules out large-scale military actions in Karaabkh conflict zone



The Artsakh-Azerbaijan conflict has recently entered a new stage, Vice President of the Armenian National Assembly says.

"Ignoring all agreements reached in Vienna and St. Petersburg, as well as all international commitments, Azerbaijan periodically escalates the situation at the line of contact, undertakes infiltration attempts," Vice-President of the National Assembly Edward Sharmazanov told reporters on July 12.

"The recent developments show that the Azerbaijani leadership has drawn lessons from Hitler Germany and uses its own population as a human shield," he said.

Speaking about the meeting between Armenian and Azerbaijani Foreign Ministers in Brussels on July 11, Sharmazanov emphasized three important points.

"The Co-Chairs once again reiterate the imperative of solving the conflict exceptionally through peaceful negotiations. Second, the Armenian side reiterates its stance that progress in negotiations is impos-

sible unless the agreements reached in Vienna and St. Petersburg are called to life. Third, Azerbaijan continues its non-constructive policy by refusing to implement the agreements," he said.

Sharmazanov believes Armenia should remain committed to its 'harsh stance.' "President Serzh Sargsyan clearly stated at the National Assembly on May 18 that the security of the people of Artsakh is the utmost objective. Second, he emphasized that the Karabakh issue should be solved through the free expression of will of the people of Artsakh," the Vice-Speaker said.

He noted that "on the other hand, the international community, the co-chairing countries should seek ways for persuading or pressuring Azerbaijan to implement the agreements."

"Azerbaijan wanted to establish a new status quo after the April military actions, to start negotiations from the scratch, but failed to do so," Edward Sharmazanov said. According to him, the meetings in Vienna and St. Petersburg were a failure of Azerbaijani diplomacy.

He called attention to the statements of the Russian Foreign Ministry, urging Baku to stop discrimination against Russian citizens with Armenian surnames. "This is not now, but what's important is that the statement is being made in the wake of June escalation at the line of contact, which could mean the Russian Azerbaijani relations are entering an unfavorable stage."

Edward Sharmazanov believes the Karabakh issue should be solved exceptionally in a peaceful way on the basis of the three principles of international law, where the full realization of the Artsakh people's right to self-determination should be the key point. He stressed that Artsakh has nothing to do with Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. "Artsakh has not been part of independent Azerbaijan at least for a second," he stressed.

The Vice-Speaker rules out the possibility of a large-scale war. According to him, the Trump-Putin meeting showed that the superpowers will not allow a new hotspot next to Syria.

## Authorities detail charges against Babayan

The National Security Service (NSS) released on July 13 more details of its controversial criminal case against Samvel Babayan, a retired army general close to an Armenian opposition alliance.

The NSS insisted that Babayan illegally acquired a shoulder-fired surface-to-air rocket system shortly before his arrest in March. In a long statement, it confirmed that he now stands accused of not only illegal arms possession and trafficking but also money laundering. Babayan denies the accusations.

Babayan, who was Nagorno-Karabakh's top military commander from 1993-1993, was detained on March 21 hours after the NSS claimed to have confiscated the Russian-made Igla system. The arrest came about two weeks before Armenia's parliamentary elections.

Babayan was unofficially affiliated with the opposition ORO alliance led by former Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian and two other opposition politicians. ORO condemned the criminal case as politically motivated.

The NSS on July 13 again declined to clarify why the once powerful general allegedly sought to get hold of the sophisticated weapon. Its statement said only that the Igla system

was transported to Karabakh and hidden near a local village after it was delivered by an Armenian national who was arrested in Georgia later in March. Babayan allegedly promised to pay \$50,000 for the delivery.

According to the NSS statement, six other men are also prosecuted as part of the high-profile case. One of them, Sanasar Gabrielyan is a longtime friend of Babayan's who also actively participated in the Karabakh war. He too is accused of illegal arms possession, a charge partly accepted by him.





## **MEPs call on Azerbaijan to stop using its own population as a human shield**



Members of the European Parliament Marek Jurek (ECR, Poland) and Costas Mavrides (S&D, Cyprus) have issued the following statement;

On July 4, 2017 Azerbaijani armed forces violated the cease-fire regime in the contact line. Azerbaijan had installed a multiple rocket launcher system in an inhabited village, thus using its own civilian population as a human shield. The cross-fire resulted in a tragic loss of two civilians on the Azerbaijani side.

We deplore the loss of two innocent lives and emphasize that this tragedy, as well as other clashes between the armed forces could have certainly been avoided, if Azerbaijan agreed to install an independent investigative mechanism to determine which side exactly violates the cease-fire. The OSCE Minsk-Group has proposed this on several occasions.

The Armenian side has agreed to install this mechanism. Unfortunately, official Azerbaijan continues to reject it.

We would like to recall that the investigative mechanism could have helped to avoid the April war of 2016, during which Azerbaijan shelled Armenian villages that resulted in the death of 12-year-old Vaghinak Grigoryan, who was on his way to school. The bodies of an elderly 90-year-old couple in the village of Talish, were brutally mutilated by the Azerbaijani forces, their ears were cut off. Since April 2016 the Azerbaijan armed forces have committed war crimes, including an ISIS-style beheading of an Armenian soldier Karam Sloyan. Pictures of the head were then posted on the social media by the Azerbaijani forces as a trophy and the cruel murder was praised as a heroic act.

These barbaric acts are unfortunately an indirect consequence of Armenophobia in Azerbaijan, nurtured from the highest levels and acts, such as elevating Ramil Safarov, who killed an Armenian colleague in his sleep with an ax in Budapest, to a national hero by the current Government of Azerbaijan.

The losses on both sides are tragic and they must absolutely be prevented. It is unacceptable to use a population as a human shield while shelling other inhabited areas and then abuse photos for propaganda purposes. An investigative mechanism must be immediately installed.

We herewith call on Azerbaijan to stop using its own population as a human shield and install the OSCE independent investigative mechanism which would create favorable conditions for trust and negotiations.

## **Implementation of investigation mechanism important – Armenian Deputy FM**



The President of Azerbaijan either does not understand or pretends not to understand the importance of implementing the Vienna and St. Petersburg agreements, Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharyan says.

The comments come in the wake of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's statements on the negotiation process following the meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani Foreign Ministers in Brussels. Addressing the government, Aliyev said, in part, that the negotiations on the Karabakh conflict settlement were resumed without Baku accepting Armenia's preconditions [on implementation of the investigation mechanism].

Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharyan recalled that the meeting between the Foreign Ministers was the fourth after the Vienna and St. Petersburg Summits held after Azerbaijan's April aggression against Artsakh.

"Like the previous meetings, the Brussels meeting was also aimed at creating conditions conducive to the advancement of the Nagorno-Karabakh negotiation process – nothing more, nothing less," Kocharyan said in comments to Panorama.am.

"It is obvious that the consolidation of the ceasefire and armistice regime is not a precondition for negotiations, but a necessary condition for the efficiency of the negotiations," Shavarsh Kocharyan said.

## French companies interested in investing in Armenia – Ambassador



The economic ties between Armenia and France are far from being satisfying despite the high-level political relations, French Ambassador to Armenia Jean-Francois Charpentier told reporters on July 13.

He added, however, that the situation is different with regard to French investments in Armenia “Large France companies show interest in investing in Armenia,” he said

The Ambassador stressed that “growth of economic interest in Armenia is connected with good opportunities to access the Iranian and Eurasian Economic Union markets.”

Speaking about the negotiation process on the settlement of the Karabakh conflict, the Ambassador noted that he stands for “direct and maximally regular negotiation process between Armenia and Azerbaijan.”

He said that “judging from the recent meeting of the Foreign Ministers, it seems positive dynamics is possible.” He said it’s now necessary to work towards organizing a meeting on the presidential level.

## First buckwheat processing factory to open in Armenia

The first Armenian buckwheat will be available in the local stores soon. Armenia, that has been importing buckwheat since its independence, will have locally produced buckwheat thanks to the European Neighborhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) and the “Hayastan” All-Armenian Fund.

Since 2015, ENPARD “Producer Group and Value Chain Development” project, financed by the European Union and Austrian Development Agency, works with 53 primary producer and processing cooperatives.

551 farmers from 67 communities are involved in 34 cooperatives of buckwheat production in Shirak, Lori, Aragatsotn, Kotayk and Gegharkunik Marzes. They supply buckwheat to the factories in Tsovaghyugh and Bavra, the latter uniting 28 cooperatives from Shirak, Lori and Aragatsotn in one cluster.

In 2016 the project provided the primary producer cooperatives with buckwheat seeds and fertilisers, and the processing cooperatives were provided with factory machinery. As a result, 520 ha area was sowed, and an average of 1.2 tons of buckwheat harvest per 1 ha was recorded in 2016.

Besides, with the support of the project, local and international experts have

provided the farmers with trainings on buckwheat sowing, fertilizing, harvesting, storage, processing, as well as buckwheat-related beekeeping and honey production.

The construction of Bavra factory premises was funded by “Hayastan” All-Armenian Fund, while the works were implemented by the cooperative.

“Hayastan” All-Armenian Fund, being an advocate for the development of Armenia and Artsakh for more than 25 years, attaches great importance to the

agricultural sector and acknowledges the relevance of ensuring sustainable income by the farmers. As such, since 2011 the Fund operates “Himnatavush” development foundation in Tavush Marz, through which around 500 thousand Euro investments are being channeled to agriculture annually.

Recently, 100th greenhouse, dedicated to 100th family of Tavush, was opened in in Tavush with funding of Argentinian-Armenian and Australian-Armenian philanthropists.





## IMF Executive Board concludes 2017 Article IV consultation for the Republic of Armenia



On June 23, 2017, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with the Republic of Armenia.

Since its independence, Armenia has made significant strides in enhancing macroeconomic stability. Growth has been satisfactory with inflation under control, the fiscal situation broadly well managed, and foreign exchange reserves enhanced. Since late 2014, the significant decline in remittances and the price of copper, Armenia's main export, have weighed heavily on growth, and adversely impacted the fiscal position. In 2016, GDP growth was only 0.2 percent, deflationary pressures persisted, and the fiscal deficit rose to 5.6 percent of GDP, while the current account deficit remained below 3 percent of GDP. Economic activity in 2017 has shown signs of recovery, accompanied by a pickup in inflation and private sector credit growth, supported by monetary policy easing, according to IMF.

With improving outlook in major trading partners and a pickup in private sector activity, real GDP is projected to grow by around 3 percent in 2017, while inflation would reach around 2 percent by end-2017. Medium-term growth is projected at 3.5-4 percent, with potential growth now estimated by staff to be 1 percentage point lower than in the pre-crisis period. Nevertheless, there are risks: the recent recovery in remittances and copper prices may not endure, and growth in key trading partners could be weaker than expected.

Looking ahead, Armenia continues to face significant challenges. Dependence on remittances leaves the economy vulnerable to external shocks, while a shrinking labor force associated with emigration makes it difficult to generate broad-based prosperity. The authorities' efforts to promote inclusive growth and increase resilience have focused on strengthening competition and governance, diversifying exports, and new initiatives to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). On the fiscal front, inadequate revenue base has limited the potential for much needed growth-enhancing investment and contributed to the increase in public debt. Against this background, the government is strengthening revenue mobilization through the introduction of a new tax code and renewed efforts to improve tax administration.

### Executive Board Assessment

Executive Directors agreed with the thrust of the staff appraisal. They commended the Armenian authorities for their sustained efforts to enhance macroeconomic stability and satisfactory program implementation despite significant external challenges. Directors noted that the economy is expected to gradually recover in 2017,

but significant risks and challenges remain, including those from a narrow growth base and a sharp increase in public debt. They called for continued commitment to sound policies and structural reforms to ensure macroeconomic stability, and foster sustainable inclusive growth.

Directors agreed that the previously planned large cut in foreign-financed capital spending to meet the budgeted fiscal deficit target, dictated by the fiscal rule, may not be prudent, given the fragile growth, the cyclical position, and the need to build productive capacity. In this context, and considering the higher projected revenues for 2017, they supported the authorities' plan to increase capital expenditure by 1 percent of GDP relative to the 2017 budget. Directors stressed that additional spending should be accompanied by intensified structural reforms to ensure sustainable growth.

Directors underscored the importance of maintaining a prudent medium-term fiscal path. To this end, they called for enhancing revenue mobilization and spending efficiency. Directors underscored that the new Tax Code should be rigorously implemented and that political pressures to dilute its provisions should be resisted. They commended the authorities' efforts to improve tax administration, which have contributed to the higher-than-projected revenue collection so far.

Directors agreed that the medium-term fiscal framework needs to be modernized, noting that the current fiscal rule lacks flexibility and consideration for cyclical conditions. They supported the authorities' intention to amend the rule, with IMF technical assistance, to help improve credibility and preserve debt sustainability. A few Directors, however, cautioned against the potential loss of credibility if the rule is breached.

Directors welcomed the Central Bank of Armenia's (CBA's) policy of monetary easing, which has helped reduce market interest rates and supported recovery in the private sector credit. They underscored that monetary policy should remain focused on bringing inflation back to its medium-term target. Directors stressed that the CBA should monitor the impact of recent policy actions and assess the need for further easing. They emphasized the importance of continued exchange rate flexibility in responding to external shocks and maintaining competitiveness.

Directors called for further strengthening the monetary and financial sector policy framework. To increase the effectiveness of the inflation targeting framework and monetary transmission mechanism, they stressed the need to develop a well-functioning interbank market, enhance communication, and promote de-dollarization. Directors supported policy measures to build a more resilient financial sector and strengthen the macroprudential framework. They welcomed the smooth transition of the banking sector to comply with the new minimum capital requirement. Directors encouraged the authorities to continue to foster better financial intermediation by developing capital markets and strengthening financial literacy.

Directors called for continued efforts to advance structural reforms to foster sustainable and inclusive growth. They underscored the need to promote private sector development and diversify the economy by attracting FDI. In this context, they welcomed the authorities' growth-promoting initiatives to improve the business environment, encourage competition, and strengthen governance.

It is expected that the next Article IV consultation with the Republic of Armenia will be held on the standard 12-month cycle.

## Views differ on restoring transport communication between Georgia and Russia

The recent report on an agreement between Moscow and Tbilisi to implement the 2011 Agreement on Trade Corridors between Russia and Georgia has sparked new wave of discussion in Tbilisi. Views differ on the perspectives of its realization.

The announcement was made after talks between Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigori Karasin and Georgian Prime Minister's Special Envoy, Ambassador Zurab Abashidze.

Some experts believe the issue has already been settled on the highest level, others say Georgia will not opt for it, as the step could actually mean recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Executive director of the Caucasian House, political analyst Giorgi Kanashvili calls attention to the fact that the parties referred to the issue on many occasions before, but have now started speaking openly about it. "Taking into consideration the experience and caution of the two diplomats, I believe that the process is coming to an end. I think the issue has been settled on the highest level," Kanashvili told Public Radio of Armenia.

The expert is confident that the highway passing through South Ossetia will benefit not only Armenia, but also Georgia.

"It will boost Georgia's role as a transit country in the region and contribute to the normalization of Russian-Georgian relations. The financial aspect is also very important," he said.

Political scientist Gela Vasadze does not share the opinion that the issue has been finally settled. "We are still holding negotiations to have Russia implement the provisions of the 2011 agreement," Gela Vasadze said. According to him, restoring the transport communication



at this point would mean that "Georgia recognizes the 'occupied territories' economically."

"Besides, commissioning of the road will face resistance in Georgia, which the authorities will hardly manage to overcome," he said.

The political scientist insists that the "commissioning of the railway will bring small revenues to Armenia and Georgia." He considers all roads will open only after the conflicts are solved.

The rail communication between Georgia and Russia was disrupted during the War in Abkhazia in 1992.

Experts in Armenia believe restoration of rail communication will help ease the burden of the country's partial blockade and will simplify Armenia's communication with the outer world.

## Armenia to host 2018 Aurora Prize events June 8-10



The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative has announced that the 2018 Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity ceremony, Aurora Dialogues and weekend of inspirational events, will take place June 8-10, 2018 in Armenia. Pre-eminent humanitarians, academics, philanthropists, human rights defenders, government officials, journalists and business leaders from around the world will gather for the purpose of galvanizing action to address today's most pressing humanitarian challenges and to celebrate the best of humanity. The weekend will culminate with the presentation of the third annual \$1.1 million Aurora Prize, a global humanitarian award given to an individual for the exceptional impact their actions have had on preserving human life and advancing humanitarian causes. The laureate is invited to share \$1million with organizations which inspire their work.

The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative was founded in memory of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide and in honor of their saviors by descendants of the survivors who wish to demonstrate their gratitude by action.

"We are gratified to be able to do this in their memory, and raise public consciousness about the humanitarian atrocities occurring around the world by rewarding those who are working to tackle those struggles in a substantial manner and at great personal risk," said Aurora Humanitarian Initiative Co-Founder Ruben Vardanyan. "As a country that has prospered despite the atrocities suffered in the past, Armenia is emerging as a global hub for humanitarian thought, discussion and action. In hosting this important weekend of events

again next year, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative seeks to continue to express Gratitude in Action by helping those who are most vulnerable today."

The 2018 Aurora weekend of events will feature the Aurora Dialogues, an international platform for academics and practitioners who explore and debate humanitarian challenges. The conference will seek to better understand the issues, analyze lessons learned from the past, and encourage innovative action in the present to foster a better future. A schedule of events and additional information about the 2018 Aurora Dialogues and Aurora Prize weekend will be available in the coming months at [www.auraprizeweb.org](http://www.auraprizeweb.org).

Nominations are now open for the 2018 Aurora Prize. Public nominations will be accepted through September 8, 2017 at <https://auraprizeweb.com/en/prize/detail/nominatenow>.

Singer and songwriter Charles Aznavour announced the 2017 Aurora Prize Laureate – Dr. Tom Catena – during the May 28 ceremony in Yerevan, Armenia. As the second Aurora Prize Laureate, Dr. Catena was awarded \$100,000 in gratitude for his dedicated service as the sole surgeon operating in the war and famine-ravaged Nuba region of Sudan. In addition to the \$100,000 prize awarded to Dr. Catena for his selfless efforts, \$1,000,000 was designated to organizations of his choosing, which included the African Missionary Healthcare Foundation (AMHF), Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB), and Aktion Canchanabury. These organizations, in turn, will continue to offer help to vulnerable and victimized populations, thus continuing the cycle of giving.

The Aurora Prize Selection Committee includes Nobel Laureates Oscar Arias, Shirin Ebadi and Leymah Gbowee; former president of Ireland Mary Robinson; human rights activist Hina Jilani; former foreign minister of Australia and President Emeritus of the International Crisis Group Gareth Evans; former president of Mexico Ernesto Zedillo; President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York Vartan Gregorian; and Academy Award-winning actor and humanitarian George Clooney. The late Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Elie Wiesel served as the Selection Committee's inaugural co-chair.



## The U.S. and Europe Must Investigate Azerbaijani Shipments of Weapons to Terrorists



**Harut  
Sassounian**  
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A stunning investigation by Bulgarian reporter Dilyana Gaytandzhieva revealed that Azerbaijan's state-run Silk Way Airlines has shipped under diplomatic cover 350 planeloads of heavy weapons and ammunition to terrorist groups around the world in the last three years. Azerbaijan asked the Foreign Ministries of various countries to issue a diplomatic exemption for these flights, allowing civilian planes to carry weapons, which would normally be prohibited by the International Air Transport Association.

A stunning investigation by Bulgarian reporter Dilyana Gaytandzhieva revealed that Azerbaijan's state-run Silk Way Airlines has shipped under diplomatic cover 350 planeloads of heavy weapons and ammunition to terrorist groups around the world in the last three years. (Photo: Silk Way Airlines)

The reporter's information is based on a large number of emails sent to her by an anonymous source: "The leaked files include correspondence between the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Azerbaijan to Bulgaria with attached documents for weapons deals and diplomatic clearance for overflight and/or landing in Bulgaria and many other European countries," in addition to Syria, Iraq, the United States, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Turkey, and Israel, to name a few.

According to documents obtained by Gaytandzhieva, "Silk Way Airlines offered diplomatic flights to private companies and arms manufacturers from the US, the Balkans, and Israel, as well as to the militaries of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM),

and the military forces of Germany and Denmark in Afghanistan and of Sweden in Iraq. Diplomatic flights are exempt of checks, air bills, and taxes, meaning that Silk Way airplanes freely transported hundreds of tons of weapons to different locations around the world without regulation."

The leaked documents also reveal that American weapons manufacturers had shipped over \$1 billion of weapons through Silk Way Airlines. These were non-U.S. standard weapons, which means that they were not intended for use by U.S. forces. When Silk Way Airlines did not have enough available planes, Azerbaijan's Air Force jets would transport the military shipments, Gaytandzhieva reported.

According to the U.S. federal contracts registry, in December 2014, the U.S. Special Operations Command signed a \$26.7 million contract with the American company Purple Shovel. Bulgaria was listed as the country of origin for the shipped weapons and Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry as the consignee. Another U.S. company, Orbital ATK, received a contract for \$250 million of non-U.S. standard weapons.

Amazingly, the daring Bulgarian reporter went to Aleppo, Syria, in December of last year where she "found and filmed 9 underground warehouses full of heavy weapons with Bulgaria as their country of origin. They were used by Al Nusra Front (Al Qaeda affiliate in Syria designated as a terrorist organization by the UN)."

Gaytandzhieva discovered that just in April and May of 2017, Azerbaijan's Air Force jets transported 282 tons of grenades on 10 diplomatic flights.

Another major purchaser of non-U.S. standard weapons is Saudi Arabia, which cannot use these weapons for its own defense as they are not compatible with its arsenal of western weapons. In 2016 and 2017, there were 23 diplomatic flights carrying weapons from Bulgaria, Serbia and Azerbaijan to Jeddah and Riyadh. These weapons were transported to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through Silk

Way Airlines and ended up in the hands of militants in Syria and Yemen that Saudi Arabia officially admits supporting, according to Gaytandzhieva.

On April 28 and May 12 of this year, Silk Way Airlines carried out two diplomatic flights from Baku to Burgas-Jeddah-Brazzaville (Republic of Congo). The military cargo on board both flights was paid for by Saudi Arabia. The aircraft was loaded with mortars and anti-tank grenades. These very same weapons were discovered by the Iraqi Army a month ago in an Islamic State warehouse in Mosul. It is not surprising that Islamic State terrorists have displayed these weapons in their propaganda videos, according to Gaytandzhieva.

The same situation existed with the shipment of Coyote machine guns, which appeared on propaganda videos posted online by militant groups in Syria. These weapons were transported on a diplomatic flight via Turkey and Saudi Arabia a few months earlier. There are many other examples of such shipments that ended up in the hands of terrorists, including some shipments sponsored by United Arab Emirates.

In February and March 2017, Saudi Arabia received 350 tons of weapons on Silk Way Airlines' diplomatic flights originating from Baku. The cargo included 27,350 pieces of 128-mm rockets and 10,000 pieces of 122 mm. Grad rockets.

Some of these shipments were paid in cash, which may account for the huge amount of wealth accumulated by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and his family.

Just as concerning are the shipments of large quantities (around 200 tons) of white phosphorus which could be deadly. Ironically, Azerbaijan, which possesses white phosphorus, accuses Armenia of using it in the Artsakh conflict.

This is not just another article, which should be read and forgotten. The U.S. Congress and European governments should hold hearings and investigate these huge shipments of weapons, most of which are destined for terrorists in the Middle East and elsewhere.

**City Spa**, one of the founders of Aesthetic medicine in Armenia, that was established 14 years ago, is still following the main principles that were implemented since the launch: to use only clinically and scientifically approved, highly effective and safe with FDA approval products and equipments imported mainly from UK and Europe.

**Depilation:** Last year City Spa launched a very safe, painless and fast acting new machine for permanent hair removal. It is the “Primelase” produced by Cocoon Medical. The machine has an innovative



international leading brands such as ZO Skin health (Beverly Hills US), GLO therapeutics (ColoradoUS). Skin Ceuticals (US) etc.

**And that's not the all: pedicure, manicure and massage will make your day.**

You are welcome to City Spa. The aesthetic doctor's consultations and skin diagnostics with Skin Scanner is fee. The atmosphere in City spa is full of love and peace. The pricing strategy is very flexible and discounts for good long term clients are available during whole year as well as different Gift Cards.

method (dynamic mode) which allows to treat very large areas of the body within few minutes.

**Localized fat removal:** In Armenia the first cryolipolysis method was implemented by City Spa in 2016. Cooltech is an innovative machine that acts as a none surgical liposuction, with a new method of cryolipolysis for permanent localized fat removal and body reconturing. It is safe, painless and very effective. City Spa is equipped also with the Wellashape machine for anti-cellulite treatment.



**Anti aging Facial treatments and Care:** City Spa offers the latest scientifically approved anti aging treatments and products for care. The doctors are regularly improving their qualifications in London and Paris, bringing the new inventions to Armenia. The products used in City Spa are only



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# Ambassador Gonzalo Urriolabeitia: "During These 25 Years The Ancient Friendship Between Two Peoples Have Been Honoured"

## The 201<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of the Argentine Republic Celebrated in Yerevan



By  
**Gourgen  
Khazhakian**

**Chief  
Correspondent**

The act of commemoration of the 201st anniversary of declaration of the Independence of the Argentine Republic took place on June 11 at Yerevan Best Western Congress Hotel Caribbean Pool.

Vice President of the RA National Assembly, MPs, Ministers, Deputy Foreign Ministers, Government officials, Ambassadors, public figures, local press reps and residents of Argentina in Armenia participated in the reception.

During his speech the Ambassador **Gonzalo Urriolabeitia** highlighted: "The people of Argentina had to overcome many obstacles

Afterwards he mentioned: "Argentina is a great country that is among 20 countries in the world having the highest GDP and has a highly developed agricultural and technological economy".

Ambassador Urriolabeitia also emphasized that "this is a very special year for Argentina

had its great impetus with the immigration of Armenians who came to Argentina to achieve what they have achieved: peace, respect, work and progress, but who look back to the motherland of their ancestors to help to build this sister country."

H.E. Ambassador Urriolabeitia stressed that within these years bilateral relations in various areas have been developing actively.

He reminded the gathered that the RA President **Serzh Sargsyan**, National Assembly delegation, various high-ranking Govt officials have visited Argentine Republic within last few years.

In turn, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia **Ashot Hovakimyan** mentioned that the leaders of Armenia and Argentina exchanged congratulatory letters on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the diplomatic relations establishment.

He pointed out the fact that both Armenia's



to be where they are now: the country that can be proud of its diversity, social integration and respect for all personal conditions and decisions, for its social mobility and respect for human rights".

and Armenia because this year we have accomplished 25 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states, that during these years have honoured the ancient friendship between the peoples, that

Embassy in Argentina and vice versa, the Embassy of Argentina were the first embassies opened in the region, respectively Latin America and South Caucasus.

Dr Hovakimyan also informed the guests that mostly thanks to efforts of the Ambassador Urriolabeitia the City Hall of Yerevan has already made a decision to name a square at the junction of Charents and Sayat-Nova Streets "The Square of Argentina".

And the main features of the reception were famous Argentinean tango and the steak indeed!



With this, The Highlights starts a new heading, THE YEREVAN NEWS.

Naturally, such a heading could not be successful with no cooperation with the Yerevan Mayor's Office, i.e. the Municipality.

Did I use a word "Mayor"?

The current Mayor of Yerevan is Mr **Taron A. Margaryan** who was elected on November 15, 2011 and re-elected Yerevan Mayor on May 5, 2013 and on May 14, 2017.

... Years ago, in the eve of the Yerevan Mayor's election, my teacher Professor Vladimir S. Haroutyunyan and myself were walking alongside Arshakounyats str. Suddenly, a young girl reporter and a cameraman "caught" us with a question: "Who do you want to see Yerevan Mayor?"

... So we've prepared a bunch of the recent news based on infos provided by the Information and Public Relations Department of the City Hall of Yerevan (Head - Arthur Gevorgyan), - with our comments indeed.

### **Taron Margaryan elected Deputy Chairman of the Chess Federation of Armenia 08.07.2017**

Today the reporting and election conference of the Armenian Chess Federation took place in the Chess House after Tigran Petrosyan. The conference was chaired by the Chairman of Armenian Chess Federation, the RA President **Serzh Sargsyan**.

Before starting the issues of the agenda, the delegates of the conference kept a minute of silence in memory of their colleagues from the federation - Ashot Anastasyan, Gagik Hovhannisyan, Stepan Avagyan, Armen Nikoghosyan, Edward Mnatsakanyan, Robert Buniatyan and Armen Harutyunyan who passed away during the recent four years.

The conference summarized the work done in the reported period - from 2013 till 2017, outlined the further plans. The report of the Supervision Commission of the Federation was presented within the frames of the agenda. The First Deputy Chairman of the Federation Smbat Lputyan presented the work done. The activities carried out by the Federation during the reported period got positive estimates.

Afterwards the election of the Chairman and the Presidium of the Federation were held. The RA President Serzh Sargsyan was unanimously re-elected Chairman of the Armenian Chess Federation. According to the Regulations of the Federation, the Presidium confirmed the candidates for the Deputy Chairmen, Executive Director and Secretary General who are included in the Board. The First Deputy Chairman has become GM Smbat Lputyan, the Deputies are Yerevan



Mayor, the Head of Yerevan Chess Federation Taron Margaryan and Levon Yolyan. Hrachik Tavadyan was elected Executive Director, Mikael Andriasyan - Secretary General. Vanik Zakaryan has become the Honorary President of the Armenian Chess Federation.

The Chairman of the Armenian Chess Federation, the RA President Serzh Sargsyan on behalf of the Federation awarded the distinguished veterans of the federation Yuri Arustamyan and Alyosha Khachatryan with the Golden Medal after Tigran Petrosyan.

Well, congratulations Mr Mayor !

Prof. Haroutyunyan's answer was an immediate one: "Mr Taron Margaryan!"

"Why?" - my young colleague continued "attacking" venerable Professor. His answer was following: "If you have been at the Avan Community just for once, you would not ask me such a question!"

... It remains to add that Taron Margaryan was the elected Head of the Avan Community of Yerevan for several years, and citizens of Yerevan were speaking in those time that "Taron turned Avan into paradise"...

"A better Yerevan", - this is the current motto of the Mayor and his team...

**Gourgen James Khazhakian,**  
*Chief Correspondent*

### **Yerevan Mayor Taron Margaryan takes part in opening ceremony of 14th international film festival "Golden Apricot" 09.07.2017**

Yerevan Mayor Taron Margaryan, the RA Minister of Culture Armen Amiryanyan, the Honorary Chairman of "Golden Apricot" IFF Levon Sargsyan and numerous guests took part in the ceremony of opening of the 14th international film festival "Golden apricot". Like the previous year, this year the program of the Festival includes competition and non-competition films.

Of the 1100 films applied from 96 countries 47 films were selected to be shown in three competition days: international feature, international documentary and "Armenian panorama".

*In his greeting speech Founding Director of the film festival Harutyun Khachatryan stressing the importance of the festival in the cultural life of the capital, expressed gratitude to Yerevan Municipality and Mayor Taron Margaryan for permanent assistance in the organization and*

*holding of the festival.*

(Well, your correspondent, as a one who has been covering this film fest since its establishment, joins to this statement with no doubt).

It should be noted that this year, in the context of proportional development of the capital, the geography of open-air film shows has expanded. Up to now the open-air film shows were held only in the area of Swan Lake and Charles Aznavour Square, but this year the festival films will be shown in the area of Cascade, in administrative districts of



Nor Nork, Malatia-Sebastia, in Lovers' Park and in Azatutyan Square ( Freedom Square).

Open-air concerts are also provided within the frames of the film festival. Every day, from 9 to 16 of July, from 21:00 till 23:00 nearby the "Moskva" cinema concerts of various jazz bands headed by popular jazzman Levon Malkhasyan will be held.

## **Taron Margaryan: the activity of season cafes must not hinder pedestrians' movement 10.07.2017**

During a regular working conference in the City Hall Mayor Taron Margaryan paid attention to the organization of the activity of season (summer) cafes, noting that they must not create movement difficulty for pedestrians.

*"We allot appropriate areas for season cafes and catering facilities. However it's necessary to keep a watchful eye so as their activity will not hinder pedestrians' movement. It's unacceptable when most of sidewalks is occupied with refrigerators, tables and chairs of various cafes. It is necessary to set control so that the entrepreneurs don't go beyond the territories allocated to them",* said Taron Margaryan.

## **Those who break public order will be disciplined 10.07.2017**

During the same conference Yerevan Mayor was reported that the control over keeping the prohibition on loud music in public areas in the evening. Mayor Taron Margaryan instructed to continue the strengthened control and to apply rigid administrative measures whenever necessary.

*"The activities in this regard must be continued as long as such violations take place. Respond rapidly to each signal received from our co-citizens and take corresponding measures. There is clear decision to forbid loud music after 23:00. Therefore, nobody has the right to disturb the peace of our residents. Every economy entity must realize that if he goes on breaking the determined order after the first warning we will have to take corresponding measures up to stopping their activity",* stressed Taron Margaryan.

*Well, this is a very timely decision for us the citizens of Yerevan !*

## **Centers of information support will open in Yerevan 10.07.2017**

And another important issue was discussed that day: the Department of External Design and Advertising, the tourism unit of Yerevan Municipality as well as the Chief Designer of the capital were instructed by Mayor Taron Margaryan to discuss the terms and submit the proposals for creation of the centers for tourists information support and citizens service. The current activities will be coordinated by Mayor's Assistant Maria Baraghamyan.



*"The tourists flows in the Capital have been increasing from year to year; and it's obvious that Yerevan needs information support centers. Such centers can also help our citizens to make communal and other payments. Discuss the issue within a short time*

*and submit proposals for the creation of such centers so as a beginning they will become available from this year both for citizens of Yerevan and tourists",* said Mayor Taron Margaryan.

## **"Yerevan summer 2017": the week of open-air film shows has started 11.07.2017**

Within the frames of the three-month program of events "Yerevan summer 2017" the open-air film show week has started "Swan's Lake".

It should be noted that in the context of proportional development of the capital the geography of open-air film shows has been expanded. This year the shows will be held in the area of Cascade complex, in administrative districts of Nor Nork, Malatia Sebastia, in Lovers' Park and in Azatutyan Square (Freedom square). Until July 16 the guests and the citizens of the capital will have the opportunity to watch the best films of the international film festival "Golden Apricot".

## **1300 people made use of the City tourist program "Yerevan City Tour" within the period from March to June 12.07.2017**

Both tourists visiting Yerevan and the City residents make use of the program of the official City tourist route "Yerevan City Tour". This year the official opening of the season took place on 1 May, however taking into account the number of tourists and active tourism season, "Yerevan City Tour" started its work from March. In March the Capital was mostly visited by tourists from Iran.

According to the tourism unit of Yerevan Municipality, in the period from March to June within the frames of 60 tours 1300 tourists, particularly from Russia, Iran, France, Germany made use of the program. The program is also very popular with the tourists from East Asia, especially from China. Attaching importance to the implementation of social programs, within the frames of "Yerevan City Tour" program the tourism unit also organized special sightseeing tours for children and schoolchildren from the RA provinces.



## Zvartnots Cathedral: “A Serene and Beautiful Example of an Ancient Cathedral”



By  
**Gourgen  
Khazhakian**

**Chief  
Correspondent**

In this issue of The Highlights we are going to tell our readers about one of the most legendary and popular ancient monuments, the Zvartnots Cathedral that was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2000. It is located 15 kilometers from Yerevan, on the Ejmiatsin highway.



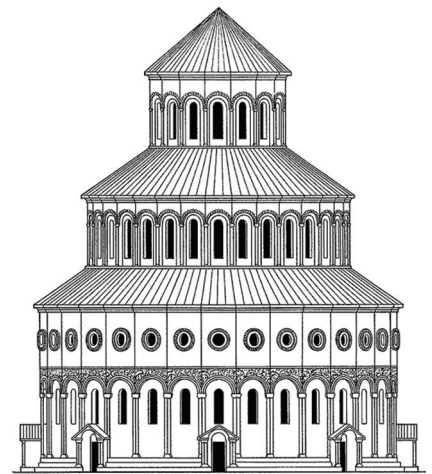
During excavations it was found out that the place where the Cathedral was built used to be an Urartian Pagan Temple (in the times of the Urartian King **Rusa II** reign) that was replaced with a basilica in 301, the year of adoption of Christianity as the state confession in Armenia. Later, in the 5th – 6th centuries it was replaced with a single-nave basilica. The ruins of Zvartnots remained buried until the excavations were started at the beginning of the 20th century, in 1901-1907 under the direction of Vardapet (Archimandrit) **Khachik Dadyan**. During those works the foundations of the Cathedral and the remains of the Catholicos Palace as well as a winery were found.

Catholicos **Nerses the Builder** (“Shinogh”) who built numerous churches within his being the Head of the Armenian Church (641- 661) ordered to built the Cathedral of Zvartnots in 643, and two years later the Catholicos’ Seat was moved here.

According to a half-legend, **Constans II**, the Emperor of Byzantine, who was present at the Cathedral consecration in 652, being very impressed by Zvartnots, took the cathedral’s architect to Constantinople to build a similar church there. But, alas, the architect died en route to Constantinople after getting a sickness.

They say that after death of **Grigor Lusavorich** (Illuminator), the founder of Christianity in Armenia and the first Catholicos of All Armenians, some of his relics were buried in the Cathedral so since that time Zvartnots Cathedral is being known as Surb (Saint) Grigor.

The Cathedral is cylindrical and a cruci-



form central domed type building having four equal cross wings. It was one of the tallest constructions of the time, being once about 50 meters high.

Another legend says that the Cathedral of Zvartnots was built in the place where Grigor Lusavorich met Armenian King **Tiridates** (Trdat) III and converted him to Christianity by Grigor Lusavorich. Just after that Armenia became the first country in the world that adopted Christianity as a state religion.

There are two versions to explain the name “Zvartnots”: first says that “Zvartnots” comes from the word of “zvartun” that meant “angel”, so the Cathedral was dedicated to the angels. According to the second explanation, the root of the Cathedral name could be found in a pagan-time word “zvartonk” that meant the spirit awakening the dead.

Zvartnots Cathedral’s composition and decoration describes in the best way the following extract from the [traveltoarmenia.am](http://traveltoarmenia.am):

*“Though the Cathedral of Zvartnots comes with a circular design, it is thought that it depicts God’s hand with the palm on the east and the five fingers on the west. In contrast to the pagan traditions the main altar is on the eastern part. In the center of the cathedral, right under the dome an opening was made in the ground. Stone stairs take to the opening. It’s where the relics of Saint Grigor Lusavorich were buried.”*

*The Cathedral was richly decorated with bas reliefs and frescoes. Unfortunately, much of the inner decoration has not been preserved, yet the preserved pieces are enough to conclude how interestingly and magnificently it was decorated. The*





floor used to be covered with a mosaic parts of which can be seen today.

The surfaces of the facades, edges, window casings and cornices included carvings of pomegranate and grapes with pomegranate symbolizing fertility and grapes symbolizing Gods blood and Resurrection. On some of the cathedral's capitals, there can be seen the carvings of an eagle, which symbolized victory, strength and resurrection in the Ancient and Medieval period. An old pre-Christian legend has it that the eagle could awaken the dead.

of the Cathedral, and so because its heaviness the Cathedral collapsed soon after that act of vandalism.

Currently a visitor could find only ruins of Zvartnots. But even in such a ruined state Zvartnots is tall and amazing, it is a real WONDER. Definitely, it is a must-see site for tourists.

There you will also see jars and fertility stones (and a phallus, the fertility stone), Urartian King Rusa II's cuneiform inscription and the Sun dial.

A number of scientific works on the orig-

**Tourist info:** the entrance fee is a symbolic one: for kids the ticket costs 100 Dram, for adults 250 Dram and for foreigners 700 Dram. A guided tour in Armenian costs 1000 Dram, and the one in a foreign language 2000 Dram.

And, as usual, a couple reviews from TripAdvisor:

*"A serene and beautiful example of an ancient cathedral"*

**Hoach, USA**

Reviewed February 19, 2017



The number of masters who built the cathedral is counted 32, and it is assumed that the portraits of the men found on the 32 facets of the cathedral depict exactly them. The images of the masters is a rare thing as in general only the first letters of the masters were being carved, while in this case there are the images and next to each image there is either the complete name of the master or only the first letter. Only nine of the twelve images have been preserved".

The Cathedral has had two-wing Palace, a Catholicos residence, with a comfortable bath. Excavations held in 1931 showed that a winery was situated to the south of the bath.

A legend states that the Cathedral of Zvartnots was built to stand firm for thousand years, but, alas, it was standing for a bit more than three centuries, until the tenth century. As in the case of its naming, there different versions for its fall:

An earthquake was the reason of the Cathedral crumbling;

Traces of great fires were found during excavations that could be explained by "efforts" to destroy the Cathedral;

During their invasions Arab conquerors seized the huge stones from the fundament



inal project layout was published. A prominent Armenian architect **Toros Toramanyan** (1964-1934) was in fact the first who published 5 reconstructions of the Cathedral's separate fragments.

Another Armenian architect, **Tiran Marutyan** (1911-2007) in his works confirmed Toramanyan's vision of Zvartnots original layout, and gave already 22 drawings of Zvartnots fragments in his book "Zvartnots" (1963, Yerevan) based on his PhD theses. In his works Prof. Marutyan claimed that the Zvartnots Cathedral is depicted upon Mount Ararat in a relief in Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.

is magnificent.

Visited March 2016

*"Historic location"*

**SurreyGirl27**

Reviewed October 31, 2016

Zvartnots is a newly excavated byzantine site which has been sympathetically restored in part. Historic value is impossible to rate and it is a site not to be missed to understand the religious beginnings of Armenia. Accessible from Yerevan via public transport.

Complex of buildings and structures with cathedrals and churches and a pagan temple.



Yerevan Home Care is the first and the only one company launched in 2011 in Yerevan. The company is providing a 24/7 qualified care service to older adults, disabled people, people suffering from chronic diseases or those who need postoperative care, as well as to people with dementia.

Creating the company we concider to support many families that live abroad and have their elderly family members staying in Armenia. We succeed in supporting these families to have not only a solution of the raised problem but to have a deep feeling of satisfaction that their relatives are in good hands.

The organization's greatest wealth is educated, professional, skilled, experienced staff and people with high values and psychological knowledge.

We treat each patient with a strong sense of responsibility and show an individual approach to the families, at the same time maintaining the accepted norms and using contemporary approaches.

Taking your relative's care on our shoulders, we bring harmony between the different generations.

Apart from the professional knowledge the company pays a great attention to the human-



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010 546 546



This type of care includes personal care aides, home care aides, and home health aides. Home health aides might also provide limited assistance with things such as taking blood pressure or offering medication reminders.

Nursing care is more related for patients after surgery, traumas, different chronic diseases

Rehabilitation service is for people who need professional rehabilitation in their recovery periods after some types of diseases and surgery. Dementia /Alzheimer /special care is for people with dementia in all stages when you worried about their safety or a health problem.

Yerevan Home Care provides all type of medical equipment that will increase the quality of life of your loved ones. (rent of the equipment is acceptable)

Transportation is a key issue for older adults and for people with temporary or permanent disabilities especially in Armenia where the streets and buildings are not adjusted for disabled people. Yerevan Home Care is providing a transportation service for people that are in wheelchairs.

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## Armenia's President meets with Golden Apricot's guests and filmmakers

President Serzh Sargsyan met with the 14th Golden Apricot International Film Festival's honorary guests and filmmakers from Armenia and around the world. The participants of the festival talked to the President of Armenia about the Golden Apricot's past record, achievements, as well as this year's contest programs.

Serzh Sargsyan sent a message to the 14th Golden Apricot International Film Festival, which reads in part,

"I am greeting the participants and the guests of the 14th Golden Apricot International Film Festival. I would like to specifically thank the organizers for consistency and dedication in organizing this long-awaited



We are pleased to note Golden Apricot's commitment to the history and traditions of the Armenian cinematographic art. Our classic heritage and contemporary works need to be publicized. The Armenian cinema should always be scrutinized and explored from the perspective of global and international developments.

Once again, I welcome the Golden Apricot International Film Festival, which is the carrier and the herald of high taste and true artistic values, as well as the noble ideas of peace and humanity".

ed holiday for the inhabitants and guests of capital Yerevan.

Well above being a source of immense pleasure for our film-lovers, this most prestigious Armenian film festival has an educational importance for young artists as a medium for promoting aesthetic values and an artistic worldview. The festival is meant to create a spiritual-cultural environment and an atmosphere without which one could hardly imagine creative flights.



## Zodiac Weekly Forecast



### Aries (March 20–April 19)

Plan to work and play alone this week. You likely will be feeling restless and generally tense. Your patience could be short and you might say things you'll wish you hadn't.

You have a desire to break free from restraints. It is a short transit. Look for a way to handle this moderately. Heavy work around the home is a good outlet.



### Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

Under your placid exterior lies a layer of desire which may or may not get you in trouble. It depends upon how you manage this energy. Make an effort to avoid mowing over others. Your drive is best used for protection of those less capable

than yourself.



### Gemini (May 20–June 20)

It is possible you will feel a sense of fatigue this week. Maybe something has caused you to be disappointed with yourself. Don't take the blues seriously or worry about yourself. In a few days you will feel

much better. It is a temporary mood swing. Get some extra rest. Stay in touch with good friends.



### Cancer (June 21–July 21)

Drive and handle tools carefully this week. Your reflexes may be off center. Exercise judiciously. Listen to your body. You are likely to be edgy and irritable, thus making an accident of some kind more likely.

As the week moves onward, you will feel better. Step aside from battles over ego or power. That is a poor use of your energy.



### Leo (July 22–August 21)

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 requested gain or privilege.



### Virgo (August 22–September 22)

Vesta, goddess of devotion to the flame (spirit), enters your sign this week and will be with you through mid-September. She was one of the Vestal Virgins, whose assignment was to attend to the sacred fire. This

represents a new development that requires your full attention. You may become the vessel of spiritual sustenance for one or more others during these weeks.



### Libra (Sep. 23–Oct. 22)

Your optimistic and happy attitude causes others to join your bandwagon and support your projects. You can envision a grand result and are able to express it in a way that others can understand. Let your imagination flow and consider adding something beautiful, maybe inspirational, to your everyday surroundings. It will perk up your attitude.



### Scorpio (October 23–November 21)

Your warrior self is front and center during this period. The best use of this energy is on behalf of the Greater Good or another person who needs a champion. Use that energy with thoughtful intentionality. Your reflexes may be off kilter. Ground your adrenalin with heavy exercise.



### Sagittarius (November 22–December 20)

This week an opportunity to expand your social life brings smiles. You may be invited to a party or you might meet someone new. This aspect is from Venus, goddess of love and creativity. The muse may be at your side as you produce a particularly creative idea or solution to a problem. Partners and clientele are verbally appreciative.



### Capricorn (December 21–January 19)

Life continues at a snail's pace due to one detour or another. People seem generally uncooperative and it is possible that forward motion is thwarted by mechanical breakdowns or even the weather. Aspects become less troublesome next week. Everyone has a week like this sometimes.



### Aquarius (January 20–February 17)

Read the lead paragraph carefully. You may be encountering one or more people this week who have a war-like attitude. Don't engage with them at all. Don't allow others to drag out your defensive side. Ignore the ongoing yada, yada of the Inner Critic. It exaggerates and sometimes lies outright.



### Pisces (February 18–March 19)

This week brings an assorted list of trials and tribulations. Speak and act with conscious intention around family members. You may feel short-tempered and snap at others. It is possible that communications could go awry. Don't allow a misperception to ruin a day. Discuss it immediately, if possible.



# ARMENIA

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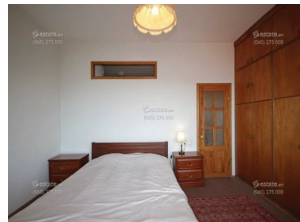
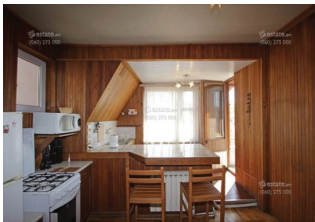
## APARTMENTS FOR RENT



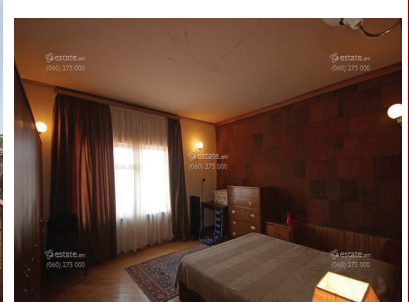
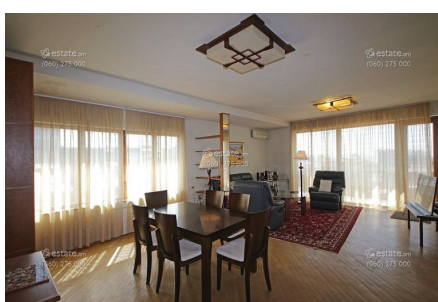
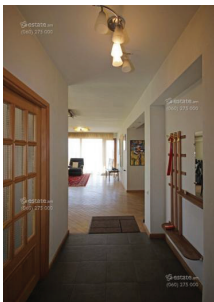
Comfortable two bedrooms apartments in the center of Yerevan, close to the hotel BASS. Each apartment is 110 sq.m., has two balconies, nice view to mount Ararat and separate entrance from the street. Both have central heating system, Wi-Fi, air conditionings, washing machines, TV sets, etc.  
Address: Aygedzor Street 3, Yerevan.  
Tel. (374) 095-27-87-09; 093-22-95-70 ( landlord )



The apartment on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Price for a long-time: \$ 850 per month; for a short time period: \$ 40-50 daily.



The apartment on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Price: \$ 1300 per month.



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