

## EU and US support a stable, peaceful, secure, democratic, and prosperous future for Armenia: High-level meeting held in Brussels



Belgium - Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken address the media in Brussels, April 5, 2024.

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, EU High Representative/Vice-President, Josep Borrell, Secretary of State of the United States of America, Antony Blinken, USAID Administrator Samantha Power, and Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan, met on April 5, 2024 in Brussels to reaffirm support for Armenia’s sovereignty,

democracy, territorial integrity, and socio-economic resilience.

**Below is a press release on the joint Armenia-EU-US high level meeting:**

The European Union and the United States support a stable, peaceful, secure, democratic, and prosperous future for Armenia and the region. In this context, we aim to expand cooperation to strengthen

Armenia’s resilience, including in key sectors such political reforms, economic development and humanitarian support. We will look to expand our partnerships, for example, in mobility, governance, law enforcement, trade, connectivity, agriculture, energy, and technology. The European Union and the United States envisage

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FM Mirzoyan briefs Argentine lawmakers on Armenia’s peace efforts

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Friends of Armenia Network calls for “more Europe in Armenia, more Armenia in Europe”

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Armenian PM briefs French lawmakers on Crossroads of Peace project

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Upcoming Brussels meeting to focus “purely on Armenia” – State Dept

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## Françoise Jacob of France appointed as UN Resident Coordinator in Armenia



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Françoise

Jacob as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Armenia, with the host Government's approval.

Ms. Jacob brings more than 28 years of experience in humanitarian and development work. She is currently the UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia, where she leads the UN support to the green transformation, the fight against inequalities, and the human rights and rule of law agenda.

Prior to that, she was UNOPS

representative to the EU institutions in Brussels, and UNOPS Director for South Asia. She held several management positions with UNOPS, UNRWA, ECHO(EU), NGOs and the private sector in Afghanistan, the Middle East, East Timor, Sudan, Montenegro, Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Ms. Jacob holds a Master of Business Administration from ESSEC, in Paris.

## Armenian FM, CoE Secretary General discuss bilateral cooperation, regional stability

On April 8, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić have discussed the bilateral partnership between Armenia and CoE and issues of regional stability.

During a meeting in Yerevan, Minister Mirzoyan emphasized the important and effective cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the Council of Europe aimed at implementing the priorities and reforms agenda of the Armenian government in the areas of rule of law, fight against corruption and protection of human rights.

In this context, reference was made to the implementation of the Armenia-CoE Action Plan for 2023-2026. Minister Mirzoyan also emphasized the quick response of the Council of Europe after the military attack against Nagorno Karabakh by

Azerbaijan in September last year and the ethnic cleansing of Nagorno Karabakh, stressing the importance of adapting the said program in order to address new challenges.

Thoughts were exchanged on addressing the mid-term and long-term needs of the rights of more than 100,000 Armenians forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, especially the vulnerable groups. Minister Mirzoyan emphasized that the Armenian government continues its efforts in that direction, including with the support of international partners.

The Armenian Foreign Minister and the Council of Europe Secretary General referred to the steps aimed at establishing a stable and lasting peace in the South Caucasus. In this context, Ararat Mirzoyan emphasized the importance of creating an atmosphere free from hostility and the



need for clear commitment in key issues.

Minister Mirzoyan presented Armenia's approaches on two key issues in the process of normalization of relations with Azerbaijan – reaffirming of recognition of territorial integrity, inviolability of borders and unblocking of regional communication. Ararat Mirzoyan emphasized the importance of adherence to the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration, as well as the well-known principles of international law.

## Armenia deeply concerned by attack on Iranian consulate in Damascus – MFA

Armenia is deeply concerned by the recent attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, the Foreign Ministry said in a post on X.

"The inviolability of diplomatic representations is a must and should not be questioned under any pretext. We express our sincere sympathy to victims and wounded," the Ministry said.

Iran has vowed to respond to what it



said was an Israeli strike on Monday that

destroyed an Iranian consulate building in Syria's capital, Damascus.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Israel would "regret this crime," while President Ebrahim Raisi insisted that it would "not go unanswered."

Iranian state TV reported that seven Revolutionary Guards, including two generals, and six Syrians were killed.

## “Crossroads of Peace” project could become an important prerequisite for Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process, CoE Secretary General says

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan hosted the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić.

The Prime Minister welcomed Mrs. Burić's visit to Armenia and highlighted the importance of cooperation with the Council of Europe. At the meeting, reference was made to the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2023-2026 and the steps aimed at implementing the agenda of democratic reforms in Armenia. In this context, Nikol Pashinyan emphasized the commitment and political will of the Armenian government. Referring to the rich agenda of cooperation with the Council of Europe, the Prime Minister highlighted the role of the Council of Europe in addressing the problems of people forcibly displaced from Nagorno Karabakh and in providing



international support.

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality and emphasized the close cooperation between the Council of Europe and the Government of the Republic of Armenia, including in the direction of the implementation of institutional reforms in the Republic of Armenia. According to Marija Pejčinović Burić, in a period full of challenges for Armenia, the Armenian

government is effectively implementing reforms in various directions.

Reference was made to the developments taking place in the region, the normalization process Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, and the possibilities of unblocking regional transport infrastructures. Prime Minister Pashinyan presented the “Crossroads of Peace” project of the Armenian government and its principles. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe noted that the “Crossroads of Peace” project can become an important prerequisite for the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process.

At the meeting, issues related to the humanitarian problems of people forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, the further steps of assistance by the international community towards their solution were discussed.

## Blinken cautions Aliyev any aggressive actions and rhetoric would undermine prospects for peace with Armenia



US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken spoke on April 3 with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

Secretary Blinken and President Aliyev discussed the importance of advancing the peace process between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which would bring economic benefits to the entire region.

The Secretary underscored that there is no justification for increased tension on

the border and cautioned that aggressive actions and rhetoric from any side would undermine prospects for peace.

The Secretary reiterated the need for Azerbaijan to adhere to its international obligations and commitments regarding human rights and fundamental freedoms and urged the release of those unjustly detained.

## Armenian PM receives members of the Political and Security Committee of the EU Council

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received members of the Political and Security Committee of the Council of the European Union headed by Delphine Pronk.

The Prime Minister welcomed the visit of the delegation to Armenia and emphasized the consistent development of Armenia-European Union cooperation and in that context emphasized the fact of the Armenia-EU-USA high-level joint meeting in Brussels on April 5. Nikol Pashinyan emphasized the importance of EU assistance in the effective implementation of democratic reforms in our country, stressing that the consistent development of democracy is of strategic importance for

the Armenian government.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to the developments taking place in the region, the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process. Prime Minister Pashinyan emphasized the importance of implementing the agreements reached as a result of the meetings held on October 6, 2022 in Prague, on May 14 and July 15, 2023 in Brussels, and on October 5, 2023 in Granada. According to these agreements, the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan mutually recognize each other's territorial integrity based on the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed the

Armenian Government's commitment to the mentioned agreements and presented the “Crossroads of Peace” project, adding that Armenia's position is fully expressed in the mentioned project. The role of the EU civilian mission in Armenia in ensuring security and stability in the region was emphasized.

Reference was made to the humanitarian problems of forcibly displaced people from Nagorno Karabakh. The consistent support of the international community in order to overcome the socio-economic problems of the displaced people was highlighted.

## French FM slams Azerbaijani claims on Armenian territory, fake news coming from Baku



French Minister of European and Foreign Affairs Stéphane Séjourné has announced concerns about the threat to Armenia's territorial integrity posed by Azerbaijan during a joint press conference

with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Paris.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France to Armenia, Olivier Decottignies, has shared this information on his official X page, posting the full version of Stéphane Séjourné's speech.

"We have reaffirmed our commitment to the territorial integrity of Armenia, which is now being questioned by Azerbaijan, and let me say how worried we are about that, given that Azerbaijan's rhetoric is getting out of hand," the French Minister

of European and Foreign Affairs Stéphane Séjourné said.

Séjourné has expressed concern regarding the increase of the fake news coming from Baku, which tends to assign responsibility for the escalation to Armenia, which today only Armenia wants to avoid.

The French foreign minister says that they see many common elements and similarities with what is happening with Russia and Ukraine calling for attention to this issue six months before COP29 in Baku.

## U.S. cautions against hostilities along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border – State Department spokesperson

The U.S. continues to caution against escalating rhetoric between Armenia and Azerbaijan or hostilities along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said.

"So, we saw the statement from the Government of Azerbaijan over the weekend. I would note that the EU monitoring mission said yesterday that the Armenia-Azerbaijan border was calm and quiet, with no unusual military troop or artillery movements, despite those statements," Miller said at a press briefing

regarding the Azerbaijani claims about the alleged movements of Armenian forces and amassment of military equipment at the border.

Miller added that the U.S. continues to encourage the creation of conditions for a just and dignified peace in the region.

"We caution and will continue to caution against escalating rhetoric or hostilities along the border. We continue to encourage the creation of conditions for a just and dignified peace in the region, where the rights of all are respected. And



as you've heard me say from this podium many times, the only way to ensure a sustainable peace is at the negotiating table," the State Department spokesperson said adding that escalation is in no one's interest.

## No settlement, no village, no inch of Armenian territory can be surrendered - Armenian Speaker of Parliament

The Armenian National Assembly President Alen Simonyan stated that there is no discussion about handing over any territory, settlement or village from the Republic of Armenia.

"They go and convince residents of border settlements that someone, including me, has said or is saying that, for example, the village of Voskepar is not Armenian, or some part of the Tavush region is not Armenian and should be surrendered [these territories to Azerbaijan]. Some journalists allow themselves to say that a village is being handed over in Tavush



," said the Parliament Speaker on social media.

Simonyan noted that the Armenian authorities are not discussing the surrender

of any settlement, village, or even an inch of Armenian territory.

To visit the border villages and incite passions by manipulating the reality, distorting the reality, playing on people's emotions is a clear proof of the worst qualities.

According to Alen Simonyan, such things cannot bring political dividends to anyone.

"The Republic of Armenia has a clear map. With that map, we have become independent and it is not up for discussion," the Parliament Speaker said.

## EU ready to deepen partnership with Armenia - Vassilis Maragos



The European Union is ready for further deepening of partnership with Armenia, said Ambassador Vassilis Maragos, Head of the Delegation of the European Union (EU) to Armenia, during parliamentary hearing on April 4, on the new prospects and challenges of Armenia's European integration.

"We will continue to spare no efforts to strengthen our relations based on our commitment and shared values, as well as our dedication to multilateralism and rule-based order," noted the EU ambassador, adding that the Armenia-EU dialogue process has never been as dynamic as at present.

Maragos stressed the importance of full implementation of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), focusing especially on regulations, their compliance and reforms.

The EU ambassador elaborated that it is necessary to match the standards that Armenia has accepted.

"The European Union wants to speed up the implementation of these commitments, which will include work, digital transition, green economy, which create opportunities for Armenia to modernize the economy," Maragos emphasized. Maragos stressed the importance of fully implementing the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), with a focus on regulations, compliance, and reforms. The EU ambassador elaborated that it is necessary for Armenia to meet the standards it has accepted. "The European Union aims to accelerate the implementation of these commitments, which will include work, digital transition, and the green economy,

creating opportunities for Armenia to modernize its economy," Maragos emphasized.

The Ambassador noted that that in connection with the economic and investment plan, an investment coordination platform has been created with the Armenian government and international financial institutions. This platform brings together all interested parties with the aim of reviewing plans and understanding what actions are needed to accelerate current investments. The head of the EU delegation in Armenia presented that more than 550 million euros in investments have already been made during this period. EU member states have mobilized over 120 million euros for the implementation of more than 35 projects in Syunik, focusing on infrastructure, civil society, economic development, employment, and the green economy. Referring to the Armenia-EU cooperation, Maragos noted with satisfaction that progress has been

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## Armenia appreciates France's contribution to the establishment of peace in the South Caucasus - Armenia MFA spox

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Armenia, Ani Badalyan, stated that Armenia values France's contribution to the establishment of peace in the South Caucasus.

Ani Badalyan has issued a comment in response to media inquiries.

**- On April 2, during a joint press conference with U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France Stephane Sejourne spoke about the need and developments to ensure stability in the South Caucasus, Armenia's real intention to avoid escalation, and also expressed concern about possible threats to Armenia's territorial integrity. Some countries do not consider this understanding of France useful from the point of view of regional stability. How will you comment?**



We believe that the statement of the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France on April 2 and the goals and important contribution of France's involvement in the process of establishing peace in the region are known to all partners. There are many examples of this both in the form of bilateral partnership with Armenia and on regional and multilateral platforms.

In this context, we can particularly mention the quadrilateral meeting held in October 2022 in Prague within the framework of the European Political Community, during which the leaders of Armenia and

Azerbaijan reaffirmed their commitment to the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration. By the way, the Prague meeting and the Alma-Ata declaration were also mentioned in the communication released by the office of the Azerbaijani President regarding the telephone conversation held yesterday with the U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken.

We also value the contribution of France as a member of the European Union. The EU mission has been monitoring the interstate border between Armenia and Azerbaijan since October 2022, deployed after the same Prague meeting, and has made relevant communications in recent days. We believe that activities and assessments of the Mission in line with its mandate should be taken into account, including while developing the positions of all EU member states.

## USAID ready to provide continuous support to the Armenian government programs – Samantha Power



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan had a meeting with Samantha Power, Administrator of the US Agency for International Development, at the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia in Belgium.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to cooperation between the government of the Republic of Armenia and USAID, current programs and upcoming

initiatives. In particular, reference was made to USAID's further support for the effective implementation of democratic reforms and institutional reforms in various directions in Armenia.

The Prime Minister emphasized that the Armenian government will firmly continue consistent steps in the direction of reforms and emphasized that it is of strategic importance.

Samantha Power noted that USAID will continue close cooperation with Armenia and is ready to provide continuous support to the programs of the Armenian government for the strengthening and development of democracy.

The interlocutors referred to the humanitarian problems of forcibly displaced persons from Nagorno Karabakh and the steps towards their solution. Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan presented the measures implemented by the Armenian government and further steps. The Prime Minister attached importance to the support provided by international partners, including the United States, to forcibly displaced people and emphasized the need for its continuous provision.

In this context, issues related to the further steps of support to forcibly displaced persons, in particular, the issue of housing provision, were discussed.

## Idram and IDBank participate in the signing ceremony of the Declaration of Women's Empowerment Principles

On April 4, IDBank and Idram signed the Joint Declaration on the Women's Empowerment Principles, among other organizations that have joined the UNDP initiative.

Before the declaration signing ceremony, the "Ring the Bell for Gender Equality" event was held, which was organized by UNDP in cooperation with the Armenia Securities Exchange.

UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Armenia Konstantin Sokulskiy, Head of the Austrian Coordination Office Yerevan Klaus Kaper, UN Women representative Olga Azatyan, General Director of the Armenian Securities Exchange Hayk Yeganyan gave an opening speech at the event.

On behalf of IDBank, the declaration was signed by the chairman of the

management board, Mher Abrahamyan. According to the latter, a significant percentage of the Bank's management staff is occupied by women. "Women are a part of the board and management as well, and this is very important for business from the perspective of making correct and balanced decisions. We create full equal conditions for our employees within the framework of their growth, development and other standards," says Mher Abrahamyan.

On behalf of Idram company, the declaration was signed by the head of HR Astghik Zilfimyan. "50% of Idram's management staff are women. I think this is one of the best indicators for our state. We do everything to exclude gender-based or any other kind of discrimination in our



company," notes Astghik Zilfimyan.

Launched in 2010 as a joint effort of UN Women and the UN Global Compact, the CSR initiative aims to promote the empowerment of women and girls in the community, business and workplace by implementing key principles.

THE COMPANIES ARE SUPERVISED BY CBA

## USAID will allocate \$8.6 million to strengthen Armenia's energy security

The US Agency for International Development is focused on strengthening Armenia's energy security and independence, and stabilizing food security, Erin McKee, the Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia at the United States Agency for International Development said during a press conference.

"Our new \$8.6 million program will improve Armenia's access to renewable

energy and integration capabilities. Additionally, contingency planning will enable Armenia to systematically respond to supply disruptions while enhancing energy efficiency.

This funding will also bolster Armenia's ability to better address critical cybersecurity vulnerabilities in the country's energy infrastructure," McKee said.

According to her, USAID will also help

stabilize Armenia's food security by supporting the efforts of Armenian farmers to increase grain production and storage.

"The upcoming \$6 million food security program will increase yields of key crops in response to climate conditions. This will be achieved by modernizing Armenia's food system, enabling us to increase domestic production and reduce dependence on imports," McKee said.

## Armenia - Regional Platform for Digital Transformation: International Doing Digital Forum Launched in Yerevan



The annual international Doing Digital Forum 2024, organized by the SPRING PR company started in Yerevan on April 3. This forum entitled “Embracing Opportunities” being organized for the second year aims to present the latest approaches to digital transformation in finance and various business sectors, examine opportunities and the specifics of their localization, and position Armenia as a growing hub for digital transformation within the global technological and business community, thus enhancing the country’s competitiveness.

Tatevik Simonyan, the founder of the Doing Digital Forum and co-founder of the SPRING PR company, deemed the forum successful during a briefing with journalists.

“Responding to the global agenda, we have brought top personalities and speakers from around the world to Armenia. We have united various companies that have

made significant progress in digitalization processes in our country, including those in financial technologies, as well as the Armenian government and the Central Bank,” she said.

Tatevik Simonyan noted that since the forum was being held for the second year, it indicated that they had indeed brought an international format to Armenia.

Referring to the importance of the digitalization process for Armenia, the speaker noted that there is a clear consensus. International structures and local organizations, as well as the global community, discuss digitalization as a necessary condition not only for competitiveness but also as the only guarantee of existence.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Armenia, Martin Galstyan wished success to the forum and then referred to the vision of the digital future, expressing his opinion that it is promising and full of opportunities. However, he also emphasized the importance of perceiving and managing the challenges that may arise in the future.

Armine Ghazaryan, Member of the Management Board, Chief People and Services Officer at Ameriabank, the fintech partner of Doing Digital Forum 2024, emphasized that technology alone cannot reach the finish line. Digital transformation is about people who act as catalysts for change and transformation, shaping

the future. Ghazaryan proudly stated that Ameriabank is a brilliant example of building a positive future.

According to her, their mission in this regard is to make Armenia a new regional technological and innovation center.

Doing Digital Forum keynote speaker Brett King, renowned futurist, author of a new concept of banking, and several best-sellers, presented how economies, banks and businesses should adapt to the digital future.

The forum hosted more than 20 speakers from different corners of the world, including the Government of Armenia, the Central Bank and Information Systems Agency of Armenia, Singapore University of Social Sciences, American University of Armenia, Visa, Deloitte, ICDT Global, Moven, Just Better, People Growth Organization, SPRING PR, Ameriabank, ArCa, Ucom, Balchug Capital, Apricot Capital, Fastex, Ucraft and Hoory companies.

As in the previous year, this year’s forum is supported by Ameriabank, which is the fintech partner of DDF24. The innovative partner of the forum is the international company Visa, the investment partner is Apricot Capital and the blockchain partner is Fastex. The partners of the DDF24 are Ucraft and Hoory.

“Armenpress” news agency is one of the forum’s information partners.

page 5 ➔ made in this direction.

First of all, the Ambassador stressed the importance of clear and sincere dialogue with Armenia on political and security issues, for which he thanked the Armenian authorities. According to Maragos, the European Union is considering providing substantial support to the Armed Forces of Armenia with non-lethal weapons.

“The European Union remains committed to stability and regulation in the region,” emphasized the EU Ambassador to Armenia.

Regarding the new agenda of the Armenia-EU partnership, Maragos stated that the aim of the European Union is to broaden partnership and cooperation. He emphasized the need for reforms in Armenia, particularly in the field of public administration aimed at strengthening democratic institutions. Additionally, he stressed the importance of a well-functioning justice system, including a robust anti-corruption framework, to enhance resilience in responding to various challenges and threats. According to the Ambassador, it is planned

to confirm cooperation with Armenia within the framework of Eurojust on April 5 in Brussels. This cooperation aims to deepen collaboration in criminal cases and ensure high standards for the protection of personal data, the independence of the judiciary, and the rule of law. In his speech, Maragos also mentioned the support for people forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, informing that the EU has mobilized more than 60 million euros for humanitarian assistance to Armenia.

page 1 ➡ stronger cooperation with Armenia to support these key sectors.

The European Union and the United States acknowledged the substantial progress Armenia has made since 2018 on democratic and justice reforms and the fight against corruption, and expressed a commitment to continue partnering with and supporting Armenia as it further strengthens its democracy and the rule of law, in line with our shared values and principles.

The EU will continue to support Armenia on its reform path through the implementation of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA). In order to boost reforms and enhance cooperation in all areas, the EU and Armenia will make headway on the new EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda.

The United States is committed to helping Armenia and PM Pashinyan carry out envisioned reforms. The Biden Administration, working with the U.S. Congress, plans to provide over \$65 million in fiscal year 2023 development assistance to Armenia.

The European Union and the United States welcomed Armenia's commitment to improved connectivity with the outside world, including the Crossroads of Peace initiative, which would promote shared prosperity and regional economic and trade diversification.

The EU and the US intend to provide further assistance to help the country mitigate risks, diversify its trade, and strengthen its economic and institutional resilience.

To underpin the new EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda, the EU will put forward a EUR 270 million Resilience and Growth Plan for Armenia for the period 2024-2027.

The EU's Resilience and Growth Plan for Armenia will aim at building up Armenia's socio-economic resilience, while supporting trade diversification. It will contribute to the long-term needs of displaced people. It will strengthen sectoral cooperation with Armenia, while stepping up support to regulatory alignment to unlock the full potential of the CEPA. The EU will continue to support key sectors from trade diversification, infrastructure development, energy, to aviation safety.

President von der Leyen also referred to the benefits of the Economic and Investment Plan, launched in 2021, which already mobilized over EUR 550 million worth of investments through grants, blending and guarantees in Armenia. In line with the Economic and Investment Plan, the EU's Resilience and Growth Plan will step up support to strategic investments, in particular on connectivity infrastructure in transport, digital and energy, and invest in business development to boost jobs and economic growth. The Economic and Investment Plan has the potential to deliver economic dividends of peace including on regional connectivity, if and when conditions allow. The EU will also look at ways to support mobility.

The United States is working with Armenia in multiple sectors to enhance economic growth and reform, trade diversification and resilience. The United States will work with Armenia to attract further U.S. investment, streamline technology trade opportunities, increase cybersecurity cooperation, and expand technology infrastructure. The United States is committed to Armenia's safe, reliable, and secure energy future and is working to support energy diversification and explore the feasibility of new civil nuclear power options that prioritize the highest nuclear security, safety, and nonproliferation standards. The United States is committed to enhancing Armenia's food security as

well as facilitating the flow of agricultural products across Armenia's borders.

Recognizing the continuing challenges that Armenia faces in supporting and socially including over 100,000 displaced persons and refugees, the European Union and the United States intend to continue providing support to Armenia in its efforts to provide housing, training, employment opportunities and psycho-social support to those who need it, and to ensure the dignified living conditions of displaced persons.

The EU swiftly mobilized EUR 18 million in humanitarian support and EUR 15 million in budget support since September 2023 to respond to the emergency and socio-economic needs of refugees. This brings the total allocation of humanitarian aid to the affected population to EUR 38,4 million since 2020. The EU stands with Armenia in addressing and supporting the long-term needs of refugees. The EU's Resilience and Growth Plan will also include budget support for the long-term economic and social inclusion of displaced people.

The United States has similarly announced more than \$7 million in humanitarian support for displaced persons and refugees since September 2023. This funding brings total U.S. humanitarian assistance to nearly \$31 million since September 2020. The U.S. assistance has provided life-saving food assistance, humanitarian protection, and emergency shelter and will continue to respond to the needs of the displaced persons and refugees. The United States will support Armenia's efforts to minimize the strain on public services and infrastructure, and facilitate social cohesion and economic development.

A prosperous, sovereign, and democratic Armenia that develops its own partnerships and freely sets its own course will contribute to regional stability

## Armenia signs cooperation agreement with Eurojust

On April 5, in Brussels, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan signed the agreement “On cooperation between the competent authorities in the field of legal cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union in the field of criminal proceedings of the Republic of Armenia and the European Union Agency for Cooperation in the Field of Criminal Justice (Eurojust)”.

The EU Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders signed the Agreement on behalf of the EU and on behalf of Belgium, which holds the Presidency of the EU Council, and on behalf of the EU member states, the Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium, the Minister of Justice and the North Sea Paul Van Tigchelt signed the document.

Before the official signing ceremony, the signing officials gave remarks.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, as well as the officials of the EU and Belgium, emphasized in their remarks that Armenia was the first to begin negotiations in 2021 on the conclusion of the agreement and today, after the successful completion of the negotiations, is the first to sign it.



Minister Mirzoyan’s remarks are presented below.

“Honorable Minister,  
Distinguished Commissioner,  
Dear President,  
Dear colleagues,

It is really a great pleasure to sign today the agreement which is aimed at further strengthening the cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union in the field of justice, rule of law and fight against serious transnational crimes.

I would like to extend my sincere words of gratitude to all colleagues here in the EU institutions, the Belgian Presidency and President Hamran for his personal contribution, as well as my colleagues in Armenia’s ministries and agencies for taking care of these negotiations. As already said, Armenia was interested in signing

this agreement from the very beginning, we were the first to start the negotiations, and I am proud that we are the first to conclude the negotiations and sign the agreement.

Besides, I would like to emphasize that we already had close cooperation with Eurojust, with Europol even without this agreement, but now this agreement comes to strengthen and institutionalize this cooperation. By signing this Agreement, we also make one step closer to the full implementation of the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement but also this opens doors to new opportunities for exchange of expertise and capacity building, as we discussed earlier.

This agreement will have an indispensable role when it comes to fostering sectoral collaboration between the competent authorities of Armenia and the European Union, aimed at facilitating mutual legal assistance, elaborating joint investigation strategies and assisting in the resolution of jurisdictional issues. It’s noteworthy that with Europol, we have already signed several documents which our Parliament is set to ratify these days.

So congratulations and thank you.”

## Ruben Vardanyan nominated for Nobel Peace Prize

Ruben Vardanyan, former Minister of State of Artsakh, co-founder of the Aurora humanitarian initiative, has been nominated for the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize by a group of renowned public and political figures, including a Nobel Laureate, Ruben Vardanyan’s office informed Public Radio of Armenia.

“Ruben Vardanyan was nominated for this high award for the creation and support for around five dozen new and unprecedented educational, charitable, scientific and humanitarian structures not only in Armenia, but also in a number of other countries,” his office said.

The nominators mentioned his activities in besieged Artsakh, where Ruben Vardanyan invested a lot of effort, trying



not only to alleviate severe humanitarian needs, but also to create opportunities to improve the living conditions of people and children in difficult situations.

“The fact that Ruben Vardanyan’s charity covers not only national, but also international levels, and has global influence and significance, was considered valuable. The Aurora humanitarian initiative – one

of the major projects he authored, aims to help and reach out to all those who risk their lives to do good in all corners of the world, on all continents,” Vardanyan’s Office said.

It is noted that Ruben Vardanyan, together with his colleagues, implemented a total of 700 projects in Armenia, Artsakh and the Armenian world, investing in philanthropy, education, preservation of historical and cultural heritage, tourism and infrastructure development and a number of other fields.

Vardanyan was illegally detained by Azerbaijan at Hakkari bridge checkpoint on September 27, 2023, and is still held in prison in Baku. He faces up to 14 years in jail.

## “Brussels Summit Fallout: Unpacking Aid Pledges and Regional Dynamics”

Noyan Tapan hosted Hovsep Khursudyan, chairman of the “Free Citizen” NGO and an analyst, to delve into the outcomes of the Brussels meeting on April 5th. Notably, the European Union pledged 270 million euros over four years to Armenia, while the United States committed over 65 million dollars. This sparked societal inquiry into the motives behind these pledges, particularly as the Russian Federation warned of potential perilous consequences for Armenia due to Western involvement in the South Caucasus.

The analyst pointed out that these rumors are propagated by entities that have long posed threats to Armenia, even from within the country itself. They argue that deepening Armenia’s cooperation with the West, specifically with the European Union, would spell disaster for the country. Interestingly, these same forces are now asserting that expectations from the West were overstated, implying that there was no need for such high expectations to avoid disappointment. However, the analyst clarified that there were never discussions of expecting billions or signing agreements for NATO or EU membership.

There is no disappointment in society; rather, there is only enthusiasm because the actual outcomes have justified the expectations. Not only will Armenia receive the promised 270 million euros as a direct grant to the government, but there is also a substantial investment volume of half a billion euros. Additionally, there’s the significantly increased assistance from the United States, amounting to 65 million dollars for one year.

The authorities had initially anticipated receiving nearly up to one billion dollars. However, as the analyst pointed out, they ended up receiving a sum close to that figure. Nevertheless, there remains unrealized funding amounting to 2 billion 150 million euros from the programs promised by the European Union since 2021. When factoring in these unfulfilled

commitments, the total amounts to almost 3 billion euros.

This event transcended mere financial implications, as it encompassed significant agreements, announcements, and outlined the region’s future. Secretary Blinken explicitly stated that the United States’ vision aligns with Armenia’s regarding the region’s future. This alignment underscores a shared perspective, in contrast to Azerbaijan, as highlighted by Khursudyan during the discussion. While this stance might disappoint Azerbaijan, it also underscores the recognition of potential consequences should it escalate tensions significantly.

The European Union and the United States have expressed their intentions to offer additional aid to assist Armenia in mitigating the risks associated with diversifying trade and enhancing economic and institutional flexibility. Many analysts argue that this trade diversification initiative alone holds greater significance than the combined sums of 270 million euros and 65 million dollars.

Following the tripartite meeting, Azerbaijan initiated shelling on the territory of Armenia. The analyst emphasized that Aliyev accurately interpreted the messages directed towards him from the West, realizing that they could lead to his isolation. Aliyev’s warning about the potential disastrous consequences of the plan prepared for the South Caucasus signals his stance against the West, implying an engagement in an information war. This posture is driven by his obligations to Russia, and the nocturnal attacks should be understood within this geopolitical context.

The shootings should indeed be considered from that perspective. It appears to be a calculated provocation by Azerbaijan, evident in their firing into the air. It’s noteworthy that they sustain this firing for a prolonged duration without causing any actual damage, likely to evade detection by European observers. This tactic

seems designed to preemptively deflect accusations of provocation by placing the blame on Armenia rather than Azerbaijan.

It’s intriguing that a Russian blogger of Armenian descent suddenly appeared in one of those villages, Movses, and began spreading panic about the shootings. This seems like an orchestrated move aimed at sowing panic in Armenia. The intention could be to mimic a situation where Armenia is under attack, potentially to deter Armenia from certain actions. This tactic might be intended to influence European observers into believing that Armenia is being targeted, thereby manipulating the narrative.

There’s a perspective suggesting that Russia is intentionally encourages Armenia to withdraw from the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). This strategy aims to ensure that in the event of an attack by Azerbaijan, Russia wouldn’t have any binding obligations, as there still exists a written commitment. This nuanced approach by Russia appears to simultaneously restrain Armenia while subtly pushing it away.

The analyst further elaborated that if Armenia were to exit the CSTO, it might prompt a response resulting in its expulsion from the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). However, such a move could provide Armenia with an opportunity to enter a free trade zone with Europe. This would potentially streamline the process for Armenian goods to access European markets more easily.

In summary, the outcomes of the Brussels meeting highlight the delicate geopolitical landscape of the South Caucasus. While Armenia secures significant financial pledges from the EU and the US, tensions persist with Azerbaijan’s provocative actions. The role of Russia adds further complexity, with strategic decisions looming for Armenia regarding its alliances and trade partnerships.

Translated by Liana Sargsyan

## EU should stop being a neutral actor between Armenia and Azerbaijan - former NATO Secretary-General



In an op-ed for *Le Monde*, former NATO Secretary-General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, calls on Brussels to move beyond its policy of equidistance between Armenia and Azerbaijan, stop being a neutral actor and play a role in mediating negotiations towards a lasting peace agreement between the two countries.

According to Rasmussen, while all eyes are focused on Russia's illegal war against Ukraine, another major geopolitical shift is happening in Europe, this time in the South Caucasus.

"Despite a historic, economic, energy, and military dependence on Russia – and the physical presence of thousands of Russian troops on its soil – the Armenian government has made a bold and concerted effort to consolidate Armenia's democracy and build closer relations with the democratic West.

"This reorientation takes time, but it also requires the European Union to adopt a more ambitious strategy towards Armenia's democracy. This must start by ending the misguided idea that the European Union (EU) should be a neutral actor between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Europe should play a role in mediating negotiations towards a lasting peace agreement.

"But its approach must reflect the reality that Armenia has chosen the community of European democracies, while Azerbaijan sits in the camp of aggressive autocracies. A lack of European clarity and

ambition could endanger Armenia's young democracy and jeopardize its geopolitical pivot," Rasmussen writes in the op-ed.

Referring to the upcoming trilateral summit in Brussels, Rasmussen says: "This new approach should start at the April 5 trilateral summit in Brussels, where European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will host Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

"Armenia has already frozen relations with the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization, organized military exercises with the United States, and sought to expand its economic ties with democratic economies. However, following the 2023 attack by Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh along with the continued occupation of strategic heights within Armenia by Azeri forces, the security situation in Armenia is fragile."

## UN Human Rights Council adopts resolution on Prevention of Genocide submitted by Armenia

The UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on Prevention of Genocide presented by Armenia.

"The resolution is a manifestation of Armenia's continuing and resolute commitment to the international efforts for genocide prevention. It is a call to prevent deterioration of the human rights violations into such an egregious crime as genocide is. The contribution of the Human Rights Council to this end is pertinent and urgent as we all witness gross abuses of human rights in different parts of the world," Armenia's Permanent Representative to UN Office in Geneva Andranik Hovhannisyanyan said as he presented the draft.

"With this resolution the Council will note that genocide and other mass atrocities often are committed within the context of armed conflict. It will reaffirm that starvation of civilians as a method of combat is prohibited under international humanitarian law and that it is therefore prohibited to attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population,"



he said.

"The resolution will emphasize that impunity is a significant risk factor for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity and that it needs to be addressed through investigating allegations, prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators. It will also acknowledge the contribution of the International Court of Justice regarding the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide," the Ambassador noted.

"The resolution will take stock of the UN and other international activities conducted in this regard, *inter alia* welcoming the HRC intersessional meeting that marked the 75th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment

of the Crime of Genocide," he added.

"It will emphasize that early warning should be linked to addressing the prevention of genocide and will task to convene HRC panel discussion on early warning and genocide prevention. It will request the Secretary-General to prepare a follow-up report and will invite the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide to an interactive dialogue with the HRC," Andranik Hovhannisyanyan stated.

"Martin Luther King famously said that 'the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.' We strongly believe in our joint mission to ensure the application of justice that the victims and their descendants deserve, including through recognition, accountability, truth, reparation, guarantees of non-recurrence and preservation of historic memory," he added.

The Armenian envoy expressed profound gratitude to all co-sponsors, to all States and other stakeholders that enriched this initiative with their valuable and constructive contributions.

## Amb. Nersesyan briefs students of St. Andrews University on Armenia's foreign policy priorities



On April 2nd, Armenia's Ambassador to UK Varuzhan Nersesyan briefed students of St. Andrews University on Armenia's foreign policy priorities.

Ambassador Nersesyan delivered an insightful presentation, delving into the

core tenets of Armenia's foreign policy and its overarching objectives on the global stage. He outlined Armenia's commitment to promoting peace, stability, and cooperation in the region and beyond. In this context, Ambassador Nersesyan presented the Crossroads of Peace project as a platform to bring peace and stability to the South Caucasus.

During the lecture, Ambassador Nersesyan elucidated Armenia's strategic partnerships and engagements with other nations, highlighting the signing of last year's Strategic Dialogue between Armenia and the UK and its role in addressing shared

challenges and advancing common interests. He underscored Armenia's dedication to upholding international law, human rights, and democratic principles in its interactions with the global community.

The interactive session that followed allowed students to engage directly with Ambassador Nersesyan, posing questions and engaging in constructive dialogue in regards Armenia's foreign policy agenda.

The Ambassador expressed his sincere appreciation to St. Andrews University for hosting the event and wished students all the best in their upcoming examinations.

## Israeli Police and settlers intrude into Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem

On April 3, 2024 around 11 o'clock, an unlawful eviction was initiated by Israeli Police on the grounds of the Cow's Garden located within the premises of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate said in a statement.

The eviction began with the destruction of Armenian Patriarchate property, and assaults on clergy and indigenous Armenians. The officer leading the eviction was Assaf Harel.

The groups of officers were asked to present permits for the eviction, the destruction of property, and physical removal of priests and indigenous Armenians from the premises.

According to the Patriarchate, permits or court orders were not presented and they continued to protect and assist the



representatives of Xana Gardens in their destruction of property. During attempts to stop the unlawful activity, several members of the police continued to state that they have come with permits without ever presenting them.

"We are here to defend the rights of the workers of Xana Gardens," they said.

The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem is one of the Custodians of the Holy Land and overseers of one of the four

Quarters of Jerusalem. We fully expect the due process that is purportedly granted to all within Jerusalem and demand answers from the Israeli Police and the Israeli Government for their participation in today's events.

"It is clear that today's provocations are an attempt to set a precedent against the Armenian Quarter and its lawful lands. We will continue to stand our ground and ask for Christians worldwide to spotlight these never-ending encroachments on the peaceful Armenian Christian community," the Patriarchate stated.

According to Save the ArQ - movement for the defense and preservation of the Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem - Israeli Police escorted settlers into Cows' Garden in Jerusalem's Armenian Quarter.

## France concerned by recent incidents in Jerusalem's Armenian Quarter

France is concerned by yesterday's incidents in the Armenian quarter of Jerusalem, the French Consulate General in Jerusalem said in a post on X.

"We call on the Israeli authorities to refrain from any unilateral action challenging the status quo in Jerusalem," the Consulate said.

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o'clock, an unlawful eviction was initiated by Israeli Police on the grounds of the Cow's Garden located within the premises of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate [said in a statement](#).

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was Assaf Harel.



## Europeans for Artsakh platform urges EU Leadership to support the right of Artsakh Armenians to live collectively

Prior to the joint meeting of the Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, scheduled on 5 April in Brussels, the Europeans for Artsakh platform has addressed a [letter](#) to the EU leadership, emphasizing the dire need of housing of the forcibly displaced indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh, said the “Europeans for Artsakh” initiative.

The letter reads as follows:

“As EU citizens, we are appealing to the EU to earmark financial means to enable dignified housing in the Republic of Armenia for the forcibly displaced indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh, until international protection mechanisms are put in place so that they can collectively return to their homeland, namely Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh.”

Drawing parallels with the international projects, following the 1988 earthquake in Armenia, the Europeans for Artsakh platform suggests that similar initiatives could provide a mid-term solution to prevent the annihilation of a millennia-old culture. The Europeans for Artsakh platform underlines EU’s role as a principal mediator of the negotiations on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, headed by President Charles Michel, since 2021.

The letter states that while the EU

leadership continuously acknowledged the necessity of protecting the human rights of the indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh, they often stressed the importance of the “integration” of the Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh in Azerbaijan and advocated for it, also when Azerbaijan imposed a blockade, starvation and carried out military aggression.

The platform makes a reference to the European Parliament (EP) resolution of 5 October 2023 which expresses “deep dissatisfaction at the fact that regular alerts by the EP regarding the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and the risks of a catastrophic outcome have been disregarded by the Commission and the Council.

The letter emphasizes that impunity emboldened Azerbaijan’s destructive policies and sums up “whereas the inaction of the Russian peacekeepers allowed Azerbaijan to carry out its heinous agenda, the EU also bears its share of responsibility for the reasons elaborated above. This does not refer to the European Parliament which honored its role as the House of democracy and continuously took an objective stance on the situation”.

In the aftermath of the ethnic cleansing, tens of thousands of forcibly displaced Armenians have sought refuge in the Republic of Armenia. While the Armenian Government has made efforts to address their short-term needs, these are

insufficient to provide a dignified life for them. The Europeans for Artsakh platform acknowledges with gratitude EU’s allocation of humanitarian aid to support the indigenous Armenians forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh/Artsakh.

Nevertheless, humanitarian aid only addresses short-term needs. As a matter of fact, already several thousand Armenians from Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh have already left the Republic of Armenia and have not returned. This is a real disaster. If the situation continues, with the time the unique culture, dialects of the millennia-old indigenous Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh/Artsakh will disappear.

The appeal of the European for Artsakh is addressed to the President of the European Council Charles Michel, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Josep Borrell, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia Toivo Klaar and EP President Roberta Metsola.

The letter will also be addressed to the governments of the EU member states, namely to the governments of the countries where the Europeans for Artsakh platform has a representative body.

## Franco-Armenian wrestler abandons Olympic dream over safety fears in Baku

Armenian-born French wrestler Gagik Snjoyan has abandoned his Olympic dream over security fears by refusing to take part in the European wrestling qualifiers in Azerbaijan, reports AFP.

Snjoyan was France’s number one wrestler in the 67 kg Greco-Roman category and was due to compete in the European qualifiers in Baku on 5-7 April, but was dissuaded from travelling by his family, who feared for his safety.

“Any Armenian who enters Azerbaijani territory risks not coming back. It’s not me who says that, it’s life that has shown

that,” the 22-year-old told AFP. “Honestly, it’s understandable. If you’ve been following the tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan lately, it’s really complicated. No Armenian goes to Azerbaijan and vice versa,” he stressed.

Born in Yerevan in 2001, Snjoyan began his wrestling career in his native country before his family sought asylum in France a decade ago.

Despite being offered increased security by the French Wrestling Federation, Snjoyan said he had been forced to make the “most difficult” decision of his career:

“I have never been in a situation like this before. I don’t think it happens to me, it happens to others. And when it happens to us, it’s not easy to deal with, to be honest,” he said.

“On the one hand you have your family and on the other hand you have your dream and your sweat that has been flowing for decades. I decided to put my family first,” added Snjoyan.

He was replaced by French N2 Mamadassa Sylla, who won the Olympic quota on the first day of qualifying on 5 April.

## “Masquerade” - a new exhibition of Aram Khachaturyan in the Armenia Wine winery



“Armenia Wine” is not only the largest wine and brandy production complex, but also a place where melody and aroma, culture and tastes, colors and emotions are merged together under one roof...

Recently, the Armenia Wine company, together with the house-museum of Aram Khachaturyan and the Wine history museum of Armenia came up with another initiative to promote Armenian culture. The “Masquerade” exhibition opened in the company’s brandy cellar, which is a unique corner dedicated to the Armenian genius composer Aram Khachaturyan.

The connection between the names of the Armenia Wine company and Aram Khachaturyan has a long history. The composer’s melodies have been present in the company’s cellar for more than 10 years.

“The Armenia Wine company has never limited itself to production processes.

From the very first moment of our activity, the most important goal was to create a national, strong system of values that would speak about “Armenians”, “Armenia” and “Armenianness”. We bear this responsibility and mission with love and dedication,” mentions the company’s commercial director, Kristine Vardanyan, adding: “The Aram Khachaturyan House-Museum, as an important center of Armenian culture, was to become our permanent partner. A cozy corner called “Masquerade” will give our visitors, guests and partners the opportunity to enjoy the spirit of Khachaturyan in our brandy cellar.”

Armine Grigoryan, the director of the Aram Khachaturyan House-Museum, happily talks about cooperation with the Armenia Wine company.

“Our cooperation began in 2022, on the birthday of Aram Khachaturyan, which is very symbolic and at the same time responsible for us. I am glad that from these two manifestations of art, music and brandy, this wonderful collaboration and exhibition was born.”

The memorandum signed between the two museums is just the beginning. According to the director of the Wine history museum of Armenia Hayk Gyulamiryan, the Armenia Wine company has a number

of plans, in parallel with the production process, to museumize various parts of the factory and present Armenia in all its charm to visitors.

In recent years, the Armenia Wine winery has become a favorite tourist destination for visitors from different parts of the world who want to discover Armenia as a wine and gastronomic destination.

“The flow of 30 thousand tourists who visited us last year inspires confidence that Armenia can really become a center of wine and gastrotourism. We are working in this direction, and I am sure that the Masquerade exhibition and similar initiatives will be important steps in this matter,” says Abraham Muradyan, head of the company’s tourism and hospitality department.

Armenia Wine and the Wine history museum of Armenia have a number of successful cooperation projects with the Matenadaran, the Yerevan History Museum, the Parajanov House-Museum, the National Film Center, the Sundukyan National Academic Theater, and the National Academic Opera and Ballet Theater. The company plans to expand the horizons of cooperation with other structures that preserve Armenian culture and present it to the world.

## Screening of The Color of Pomegranate at UNESCO HQ marked the start Parajanov’s centennial events

The screening of The Color of Pomegranate at UNESCO headquarters marked the start of the events dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Sergei Parajanov.

The delegation led by Armenia’s Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports Zhanna Andreasyan participate in the event.

Opening remarks were delivered by Minister Zhanna Andreasyan, Armenia’s Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to France Hasmik Tolmajian, UNESCO Deputy Director General for Culture Ernesto Ottone.

Expressing gratitude to UNESCO



leadership for their support and the attendees for their participation, Zhanna Andreasyan noted: “Sergei Parajanov is the embodiment of a creative genius, a renowned master whose films deeply

fascinate audiences around the world and are an integral part of the world’s cultural heritage.” The Minister particularly appreciated the role of UNESCO in the preservation of cultural heritage and promotion of cultural diversity.

The film screening was followed by a discussion led by French-Armenian director and actor Serzh Avetikyan.

As part of the jubilee events, a photo exhibition dedicated to Sergei Parajanov and the “Cinema Temple” installation, which is based on the film “The Color of the Pomegranate”, will be held at the UNESCO headquarters from April 3-10.

# ARMENIA

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