

Pashinyan Demands Faster Tax Reforms



Armenia - Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan (C), the newly appointed chief of the State Revenue Committee, Davit Ananyan (L), and his predecessor Vartan Haritunyan meet senior SRC officials, Yerevan, 18 May 2018.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian demanded a more radical improvement of tax administration in Armenia on May 18 as he presented the new head of the State Revenue Committee (SRC) to senior officials from the government agency.

Pashinyan said reforms carried out by the previous SRC chief, Vartan Harutiunyan, are “not sufficient.” The SRC must avoid “hampering economic entities” and at the same time vigorously combat tax evasion and increase tax revenue, he said.

Pashinyan also told Harutiunyan’s successor, Davit Ananyan, to “root out corruption” among tax and customs officers that has long been a major source of complaints by Armenian businesspeople.

“The success of our efforts to transform the positive energy accumulated as a result of recent political developments into concrete economic results greatly depends on the work of the SRC, the tax and customs bodies,” he declared.

“Mr. Prime Minister, I can assure you that we will accomplish the tasks which the country’s government will set for us,” said Ananyan.

Ananyan worked as a deputy minister of finance from October 2016 until his appointment as SRC chief. The 46-year-old was a tax inspector in the 1990s and ran a private tax and accounting consultancy from 2006-2016.

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Armenian PM, Russian President meet in Sochi, discuss "allied" partnership



Russian President Vladimir Putin received Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on the sidelines of the Eurasian Economic Union summit in Sochi.

Putin first congratulated Pashinyan on taking office and wished him success as head of government and voiced hope the relations between the two countries would continue to develop as steadily as before.

The Russian President noted

that "Russia sees Armenia as its closest partner any ally in the region. Putin reminded that Russia remains Armenia's main trade and economic partner, and Russian investments make up 35% if all investments in Armenia.

Putin assured that "Moscow will continue to work with Yerevan as actively on international arena and within the framework of international organizations, starting from the UN, where Ar-

menia and Russia have always supported each other to regional security and economic integration frameworks."

Pashinyan noted, in turn, that the allied relations between Armenia and Russia are beyond discussion and added that "there is a consensus on the issue in Armenia."

"I think that no one has and will never question the strategic importance of Armenian-Russian relations. We are planning to give

new impetus to bilateral relation both in economic and political domains.

He also voiced hope the relations would continue to develop in the military-technical spheres.

"We highly value Russia's balanced stance during the domestic political crisis in Armenia. It was a very constructive position, and it's highly appreciated not only by the Armenian government, but also the society," Pashinyan stated.



Armenian Deputy FM calls out Azerbaijan's "Daesh-style crimes"

Violence in the Middle East has seriously harmed the Armenian communities of the region, Armenia's Deputy Foreign Minister Ashot Hovakimyan said, addressing a ministerial conference on "Ethnic and religious

violence" in Brussels.

He noted that many Armenians have been killed as a result of terrorist actions, a number of Armenian settlements, churches, schools and cultural establishments have

been destroyed, forcing Armenians to leave their homes 100 years after the Armenian Genocide.

The Deputy Foreign Minister noted that Armenia was one of the first countries to criticize the mass killing of the civilian population by terrorist groups.

He reminded that the Armenian Parliament officially recognized and strongly condemned the Yazidi Genocide in Iraq, thus reaffirming its commitment to keep fighting for prevention of genocides and other crimes against humanity.

Ashot Hovakimyan called Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov's statements on Nagorno Karabakh false and unfounded and reminded about Azerbaijan's Daesh-style crimes against Armenians.

The Deputy Foreign Minister He also pointed out that the Azerbaijani policy of justifying hate crimes and glorification of criminals, the patronage of violence and terrorism and bellicose rhetoric on the state level are strongly condemnable.



Armenian PM addresses EAEU summit

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan participated in the sitting of the Supreme Council of the Eurasian Economic Union along with the President of Russia Vladimir Putin, President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev and Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Sooronbay Jeenbekov. President of Moldova (an EAEU observer state) and Chairman of the EAEU Board Tigran Sargsyan were present at the meeting.

Addressing the summit, PM Pashinyan first congratulated everyone on Victory Day and thanked Vladimir Putin for the warm welcome.

“As it is known peaceful transition of power has taken place in Armenia, which I think you are well informed of. We have already formed the government, which does not envisage changes in foreign policy vectors. I confirm my full commitment to Armenia’s international obligations. We expect active cooperation with EAEU partners, based on the practical interests of free movement of goods, services, labor and capital, as well as the introduction of privileged regimes of economic cooperation, which is regulated by the Union law,” Pashinyan said.

The Armenian Prime Minister expressed hope that the further cooperation of the Eurasian Economic Union member states would be aimed at



development, creation of favorable conditions for entrepreneurship and investment, and improvement of the living standards of the citizens.



Armenian PM, US Ambassador discuss bilateral cooperation



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received Richard Mills, U.S. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Armenia.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of developing the U.S.-Armenian relationships and welcomed Washington’s commitment and willingness to give new impetus to bilateral cooperation in different spheres.

“The Government of the Republic of Armenia highly appreciates and is interested in the furtherance of bilateral cooperation and, eventually, having the United States’ support in the process of democratic development, anticorruption campaign, human rights protection and other key reforms. We are full of energy to achieve our goals and specific results, taking into account the positive atmosphere in the country,” Nikol Pashinyan said, stressing that his government is firmly determined to catalyze the efforts in the aforementioned directions.

Congratulating Nikol Pashinyan on assuming the office of Prime Minister, Richard Mills assured of the U.S. Government’s commitment to assist Armenia in achieving its goals.

“The U.S. government is committed to supporting your stated goals of democracy, human rights, transparency and accountability, which will improve Armenia’s business environment and make the country more attractive to U.S. investors. We see several opportunities for dialogue and collaboration, including through the U.S.-Armenian Task Force,” Ambassador Mills said.

The parties discussed the possibility of increasing the trade turnover between the two countries, holding parliamentary elections in Armenia, amending the Electoral Code, as well as regional and other issues of mutual interest.

Trump says looking forward to strengthening trade ties with Armenia



US President Donald Trump has congratulated Nikol Pashinyan on his election as Armenia's Prime Minister. The message reads:

"Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Congratulations on your election. I look forward to working with you on the many areas of mutual interest for our two countries, including strengthening trade ties, democratic institutions, and regional security.

Progress on fighting corruption, bringing all political parties together, and peacefully solving the Nagorno Karabakh conflict will help these efforts and ensure Armenia's bright future."

Artsakh Foreign Minister receives HALO Trust CEO



On May 16, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh Republic) Masis Mayilian received the Chief Executive Officer of the international non-governmental organization The HALO Trust, James Cowan.

The sides discussed a range of issues related to the incident, which happened on March 29, 2018 in the Martakert region of the Artsakh Republic.

During the meeting, an exchange of opinions on the implementation of the future projects of The HALO Trust in Artsakh also took place. Masis Mayilian highly appreciated the activities of the organization on humanitarian mine clearance in Artsakh.

Regional Director of The HALO Trust Ashley Boddy and The HALO Trust Artsakh Program Manager Michael Newton also participated in the meeting.

Armenian DM briefs OSCE Rep. on situation at Armenian-Azerbaijani border

Armenian Defense Minister David Tonoyan received the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk.

The Defense Minister briefed Amb. Kasprzyk on the situation at the Armenian-Azerbaijani state border and the Artsakh-Azerbaijan line of contact, the frequency of ceasefire violations.

David Tonoyan expressed concern over the recent intensification of actions by the rival at some sections of the border and the line of contact, leaving Artsakh Defense Ministry soldier Shamkhal Petrosyan wounded.

The Defense Minister attached importance to the strict adherence to the ceasefire regime to prevent any provocations and refrain from destabilizing the situation.

Andrzej Kasprzyk wished a speedy recovery to the Armenian serviceman and expressed willingness to take maximum efforts in his mediating mission.

The parties also discussed issues related to the cooperation between Ambassador Kasprzyk's mission and the Armenian Ministry of Defense. Reference was made to other issues of reciprocal interest.



EU confirms readiness to work together with Armenia's new Government



On 16 May 2018, the EU and Armenia held the 9th round of their regular Human Rights Dialogue in Yerevan. This was the first EU-Armenia regular meeting following the election of the new Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.

The EU and Armenia reiterated their commitment to the common values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. These values underpin the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement signed on 24 November 2017 and unanimously ratified by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on 11 April. The EU confirmed its readiness to work together with the new Armenian Government and to offer its support in these crucial areas.

The EU and Armenia discussed, inter alia, electoral reform, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression and gender equality, as well as labor rights. On electoral reform, the EU recommended amending the legislation bringing it in line with international recommendations

and commitments undertaken by the Republic of Armenia prior to the early elections.

It was stressed by both sides that freedom of assembly is a universal and fundamental right of all. The EU welcomed the peaceful nature of recent protests and the general restraint shown by all sides, and inquired about the status of those who had been detained. The Dialogue highlighted the importance of a free and pluralistic media environment and political pluralism as a prerequisite for the conduct of democratic elections.

Armenia reconfirmed its commitment to the adoption of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law in line with international standards and to establishing a national equality body under the Human Rights Defender's office. The Armenian Government will hold interactive public hearings with civil society organizations to ensure effective implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan. In the area of labor rights, Armenia indicated that it planned to reform the system of labor inspection to comply with international standards, including with regard to working time, wages and workers' rights.

The dialogue allowed for an open, constructive exchange on the human rights situation in Armenia. In line with its policy, the EU had prior to the dialogue met and consulted representatives of Armenian and international civil society. The meeting resulted in operational conclusions with concrete actions that will be monitored and followed up over the next year.

The EU reconfirmed its readiness to provide financial and technical support to Armenia, necessary for continuing the reforms aimed at further strengthening democratic institutions and human rights.

The Armenian delegation was headed by Mr. Garen Nazarian, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, while the EU delegation was led by Mr. Dirk Schuebel, Head of Division for bilateral relations with Eastern Partnership countries at the European External Action Service.

PACE sanctions head of Azerbaijani delegation over corruption allegations



The PACE Committee on Rules of Procedure has found that four individual members named in the report of the Independent Investigation Body looking into allegations of corruption within the Assembly have "seriously breached" its Code of Conduct, and ruled that all four should be temporarily deprived of a number of rights in the Assembly – including the right to be appointed or act

as a rapporteur, to stand for a number of key posts, or to observe elections.

Following a hearing yesterday in Paris with three of the four members concerned – the fourth had already attended an earlier hearing – the committee decided that the sanctions should apply to Pedro Agramunt (Spain, EPP/CD) for a period of ten years, and Cezar Florin Preda (Romania, EPP/CD), Samad Seyidov (Azerbaijan, EC) and Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE) for a period of two years.

All four, while remaining members of the Assembly with the right to speak, will be banned during these periods from acting as a rapporteur or an election observer, and cannot be Chair or Vice-Chair of any committee or sub-committee, or stand for election as President of the Assembly.

They will not be able to represent the Assembly or its committees at any third-party events, and will also be deprived of the right to address questions to the Committee of Ministers, the Council of Europe's executive body.

This was the second hearing of the Rules Committee concerning the conduct of individual members, using powers in the Assembly's Code of Conduct, and forms part of the Assembly's follow-up to the report of the Investigation Body. A first hearing was held in Strasbourg on 25 April 2018.

Foreign Affairs MEPs back EU partnership agreement with Armenia

Members of the EU Foreign Affairs Committee gave their consent to the EU-Armenia comprehensive and enhanced partnership agreement on Wednesday, opening up the possibility for deeper cooperation in different sectors.

The negotiations on the new EU-Armenia partnership agreement were launched in 2015 and concluded in 2017. It was then signed by both sides in November 2017. The final agreement marks a deeper EU-Armenia political dialogue, broadens the scope of economic cooperation and provides new opportunities for closer ties on energy, transport, infrastructure, environment, trade, education and other sectors.

MEPs backed the deal by 55 votes to 2 with 7 abstentions.

Domestic reforms

The new partnership agreement is not the end point in terms of EU-Armenia cooperation, but a tool to promote domestic reforms and their implementation, says a separate resolution, drafted by EP's rapporteur László TŐKÉS (EPP, HU) and ad-



opted with 63 votes to 2 and 1 abstention. MEPs call on Armenia to make significant progress as regards media freedom, the independence of judiciary, fight against corruption, money laundering, tax evasion and abusive oligarchic control. They remind that the backsliding on EU values, such as democracy, the rule of law or human rights, could trigger the suspension of the agreement, however.

Peaceful transition of power

Foreign affairs MEPs applauded the citizens of Armenia on recent peaceful transition of power and welcome the restraint shown by the law enforcement bodies, though

some unjustified arrests of peaceful demonstrators rise concerns. They congratulate Nikol Pashinyan on his election as the new Prime Minister of Armenia and look forward to increased cooperation.

Trade

MEPs regret the Agreement cannot include the removal of tariff barriers because of Armenia's membership of the Eurasian Economic Union. However, they stress that it does not prevent the EU to be the main Armenia's trading partner and first donor, thus demonstrating that the EU does not hold as a prerequisite for partner to choose deeper relations with the EU at the expense of their relations with

third parties.

They also call on the Commission to ensure that EU assistance is not directed in Armenia towards sectors affected by Russian sanctions in the EU.

Nagorno Karabakh

Foreign affairs MEPs urge Armenia and Azerbaijan to increase the pace and output of their negotiations following the 2018 elections in both countries "in order to make history by ending a conflict which can't be solved militarily". They support OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs efforts and "all initiatives conducive to peace and to developing good neighbourly relation including high-level talks, a ceasefire monitoring mechanism", and call on the EEAS and the Commission to increase EU support to programmes allowing for increased contacts between Armenian and Azerbaijani NGOs and youth organizations.

Next steps

The full House will have a final vote on the agreement in Strasbourg in July 2018.

EAEU-Iran deal will open up wide perspectives for Armenia, experts say

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and Iran signed a three-year provisional agreement on May 17, which, experts say, will open up broad opportunities for Armenia.

According to expert in Iranian studies Gohar Iskandaryan, the agreement will allow to increase the volume of commodity turnover within the free trade zone and therefore register economic growth in the countries involved.

Economist Atom Margaryan noted, in turn, that Iran man-



ages to achieve economic growth even under the conditions of closed economy.

"The agreement can be a serious boost for the investment

programs, innovation projects, as well as implementation of joint initiatives in the fields of science and technology," he said.

Gohar Iskandaryan believes that in the wake of US President Donald Trump's decision to pull out of the Iran deal, the new agreement will allow Iran to cooperate with the large EAEU market and avoid huge shocks as a result of US sanctions.

According to her, the market further grows, considering that China has also concluded a deal with the Eurasian Economic Union. Furthermore, Vietnam, India and EU are also interested in cooperating with EAEU.

Fitch: Peaceful resolution of Armenia's political crisis minimized impact on economy



The peaceful resolution of Armenia's political crisis via constitutional processes, and the continued smooth functioning of economic institutions such as the central bank have minimized the impact of the crisis on the economy, Fitch Ratings says.

According to the report, economic disruption from the transition appears to have been minimal. The financial sector did not see destabilizing pressure on bank liquidity or deposits, while international reserves remain at prudent levels. A favorable external environment in terms of commodity prices, export demand and continued remittance growth reduces near-term risks for the economy. Real GDP growth was 7.5% in 2017, and the Economic Activity Indicator rose by an average of 10.6% yoy in 1Q18.

Mr Pashinyan's cabinet, which includes experienced technocrats as well as private sector professionals, has until the second week of June to present a policy

programme.

"We believe certain factors point to broad continuity in the commitment to preserve macroeconomic and financial stability as well as the sustainability of fiscal accounts. For example, the Central Bank of Armenia has a high degree of independence, and the recently named Minister of Finance was the Deputy Finance Minister under a previous administration and is a career technocrat. Certain reform initiatives to lift growth prospects could overlap with initiatives of the previous government, which aimed for economic diversification and to improve the business environment," Fitch Ratings said.

Nevertheless, it adds, that domestic political uncertainty has not been fully dispelled, since the incoming administration faces significant challenges. "Mr Sargsyan's Republican Party of Armenia remains the largest party in parliament, and it is not clear that Mr Pashinyan, a political outsider, can build and maintain

a parliamentary majority and balance the need to work with entrenched economic interest groups while maintaining popular support by pursuing his broad aims of tackling corruption and a commitment to social justice."

In order to strengthen his government's position, the incoming Prime Minister has indicated he will seek fresh parliamentary elections in 2018, but this initiative requires the approval of three-fifths of parliament. Failure to approve a government programme after two attempts would also lead to elections.

"Mr Pashinyan has clearly stated that he is committed to foreign policy continuity. This would mean maintaining the 'multi-vector' approach that seeks to balance relations between western partners and Russia. In addition to reducing the risk of international tensions, the combination of economic and foreign policy continuity implies that technical and financial support from international financial institutions and bilateral partners will likely remain available. The absence of foreign involvement contained the impact of the protests on confidence," Fitch Ratings added.

The rating agency does not anticipate near-term progress in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, and considers escalation to be a material risk given repeated clashes over the past two years.

"Armenia's growth prospects and fiscal consolidation progress drove our decision to revise the Outlook on the country's 'B+' sovereign rating to Positive last December, and will remain important factors in our ratings assessment," it added.

Pashinyan Demands Faster Tax Reforms

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Harutiunyan, who is close to former Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan, resigned on Thursday. He pledged to embark on a major reform reforms after being named to run the SRC in October 2016.

The total amount of taxes and customs duties collected by the SRC rose by more than 7 percent last year, helping the government to cut the state budget deficit to 3.3 percent of GDP. The SRC reported an even faster rise in state revenue in the first quarter of this year.

At 1.16 trillion drams (\$2.4 billion), the Armenian government's 2017 tax revenue was equivalent to almost 21 percent of GDP. The proportion is still quite low by international standards, reflecting the scale of tax evasion in Armenia.

The tax-to-GDP ratio stood at less than 18 percent in 2012. It rose by 0.5 percentage points in 2017, according to the SRC.

Harutiunyan, whom Pashinyan publicly thanked for his work, defended his track record in a farewell statement to the SRC employees issued on Friday. "The great effort to improve the [tax collection] system and the implementation of effective projects have borne fruit: relations between business and the state structure have been moved on to a plane of dialogue and partnership," he said.

The International Monetary Fund praised the Karapetyan government's "efforts to improve tax administration" already in June 2017. It said that they have "contributed to the higher-than-projected revenue collection."

By Emil Danielyan

Ptghnavank: a Unique Monument of the Early Medieval Armenia



*Compiled by
Gourgen
James Khazhakian*

Chief Correspondent

Ptghnavank is an early medieval Armenian architectural monument, a monastery situated in Ptghni Village, Kotayk Marz, in the center of archaeological spacious area. It was built by Prince **Manuel Amatuni** in the VI-VII centuries.

arches, defined the central square. The dome was supported by massive pylons. Presently, the only preserved parts of the Monastery are most of the north wall, east part of the south wall with one of the four impost arches of the dome, and some traces of the vaulting. The temple was lightened by a large number of wide windows. The temple had 3 luxuriously decorated 3 entrances - the northern, the southern and the western.

Ptghnavanq is famous for its rich decoration – ornaments and sculptures with vegetal and

on the right side. In the center of the southern entrance's arch there is the sculpture of the Virgin in medallion with angels from 2 sides, and at the cornice the sculpture of jugs and the sculpture of a lion sitting under a palm tree could be seen.

The sculptures of Ptghnavanq are one of the most valuable and unique creations of the early medieval Armenian architecture.

On the polished stones of the Monastery a lot of marks and signatures of the masters could be found.



Ptghnavank is one of the oldest examples of a domed hall churches in early Medieval Armenia. The width of the structure is 15,7m and the length - 30,4m. The altar apse was flanked by two square side chapels, each with a niche. Four mighty pilasters, connected by lofty

geometrical motives. The sculpture of horse-back Prince Manuel Amatuni throwing a dart to a lion which is situated on the left - central part of ornamented arch of the southern entrance and the sculpture of Manuel's son, **Sahak Amatuni** fighting against a lion situated

In 1930-40s the partial restoration works of Ptghnavanq have been carried out regularly.

*Photos from Wikipedia
(by Armen Manukov)
and hushardzan.am*

Yerevan Mayor refuses to quit despite protests



Yerevan's Mayor Taron Markaryan ruled out his resignation on May 16 in the face of continuing protests by supporters of Armenia's new central government who accuse him of corruption and mismanagement.

Markaryan has been under pressure to step down since opposition leader Nikol Pashinyan replaced Serzh Sargsyan as the country's prime minister on May 8 after weeks of massive anti-government protests. Groups of Pashinyan supporters have demonstrated outside the mayor's office on a daily basis.

Over 30 protesters broke into the municipality building on Wednesday morning after it emerged that trees have been cut down in a nearby public park undergoing a complete reconstruction financed by a private charity. Police officers stopped them from advancing further towards Markaryan's office.

The angry protesters blocked a corridor leading to the office for nearly three hours, demanding that the mayor

explain what they see as the park's destruction and resign. They rejected a proposal by Markaryan's two deputies to vacate the building and meet with the mayor in an adjacent conference hall.

The municipal administration publicly demanded that the Armenian police take action against the intruders. The police chief, Valeri Osipyan, discussed the incident with Markaryan by phone afterwards.

"Why didn't they inform us

before cutting the trees?" one protester told RFE/RL's Armenian service "Why didn't they say what they are going to do?"

Alen Simonyan, until now a member of Yerevan's municipal council representing Pashinyan's Yelk alliance, backed the protesters' demands when he arrived at the scene. He said that Markaryan, who is affiliated with Sargsyan's Republican Party (HHK), must quit because he is part of a "political team" that has lost

power in the country. Simonyan also criticized Markaryan's track record.

The mayor rejected these demands when emerged from the building later in the day to speak to reporters in the presence of several dozen supporters holding a counter-demonstration there."I condemn that," he said. "It's clear that there was a violation of the law. The activists broke into the municipality building and tried to disrupt the normal work of the municipality."

Markaryan insisted that he is not obliged to quit because of the regime change in Armenia. "All over the world it's not common practice for a political force to try to suppress elected local government bodies after coming to power," he said. "We will continue our work. We will make Yerevan a better place."

The HHK again won a majority of seats in the municipal council in local elections held last year. The council in turn reelected Markaryan, 40, as Yerevan mayor.



EMS Conference

Emil Artin International Conference

Dedicated to the 120th Anniversary of Emil Artin (03.07.1898-20.12.1962)

Yerevan, the Republic of Armenia, May 27-June 2, 2018.

The conference is organized by:

- Armenian Mathematical Union
- Yerevan State University
- American University of Armenia
- Committee of Emil Artin Junior Prize in Mathematics
- Institute of Mathematics of National Academy of Sciences of Armenia
- University of Bergen

Academically supported by the Steklov Mathematical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The aim of the conference is to provide a forum where specialists will meet to share ideas of latest research in Algebraic Structures, Mathematical Logic, Number Theory, Pure and Applied Mathematics, Discrete Mathematics and Computer Science.

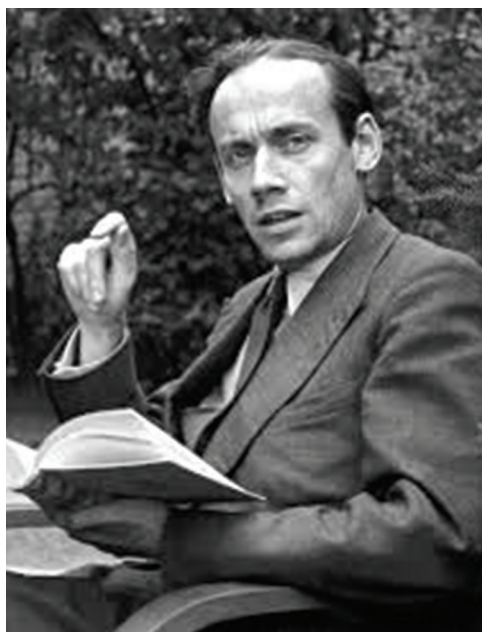
The conference will be held at the Yerevan State University and American University of Armenia.

Conference Topics:

- Classical and non-classical Algebraic Structures,
- Algebra and Logics, Number Theory,
- Geometry and Topology, Analysis and Equations,
- Boolean and De Morgan functions, Cryptography and Discrete Mathematics, Applied Mathematics,
- Universal Algebra, Computer Science and IT,
- Artin L-functions, Dynamical Systems,
- Quantum information theory, Quantum Logic and Quantum Computation, Quantum Groups and Quantum Quasigroups.

Invited speakers that confirmed their participation:

- Sergey Adian (Steklov Mathematical Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences)
- Ara Basmajian (City University of New York, Hunter College, USA)
- Lilya Budaghyan (Bergen University, Norway)
- Tullio Ceccherini-Silberstein (Universita' del Sannio, Italy)
- Rostislav Grigorchuk (Texas A&M University, USA)
- Alexander Guterman (Moscow State University, Russia)
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- Aleksandar Krapež (Mathematical Institute SASA, Belgrade, Serbia)
- Hayk Melikyan (North Carolina Central University, USA)
- Daniele Mundici (University of Florence, Italy)
- Alexander Olshanskii (Vanderbilt University,



USA)

- Alexey Parshin (Steklov Mathematical Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences)
- Evgeny Plotkin (Bar Ilan University, Israel)
- Victor Pambuccian (Arizona State University, USA)
- Nikolay Romanovskiy (Sobolev Institute of Mathematics, Russia)
- Anna Romanowska (Warsaw University of Technology, Poland)
- Hanamantagouda Sankappanavar (State University of New York at New Paltz, USA)
- Armen Sergeev (Steklov Mathematical Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences)
- Victor Shcherbacov (Institute of Informatics and Mathematics Moldova Academy of Sciences)
- Ivan Shestakov (São Paulo University, Brazil)
- Jonathan Smith (Iowa State University, USA)
- Katrin Tent (University of Münster, Germany)
- Anatoly Vershik (St.Petersburg Dept. of Steklov Mathematical Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences)
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- Vladimir Sahakyan

Registration fee for the conference is \$200 for participants and covers the conference materials and coffee breaks. **Banquet:** \$50. All fees are due upon arrival, at the registration desk.

Important dates:

The deadline for conformation of participation and submission of abstracts is April 1, 2018 by E-mail address: amu@ysu.am. Please submit one-page abstract in LaTeX and PDF formats (in English) to amu@ysu.am.

Working days: May 28, 2018 (Registration, 9:30; Opening ceremony, 10.00) – June 1, 2018.

Arrival: May 27, 2018; departure: June 2, 2018.

Additional information can be requested by e-mail: amu@ysu.am

The conference website: <http://math.sci.am/conference/artin120>

We are looking forward to welcome you in Yerevan, Armenia for the Emil Artin International Conference.

Sincerely,

Prof. Yu. Movsisyan

President of the Armenian Mathematical Union

Bundeswehr Munich University delegation visits Armenia's National Defense Research University



On 14 May the delegation of the Munich University of Federal Armed Forces made a study visit to the National Defense Research University, MOD, RA.

Lieutenant General Hayk Kotanjian, Founding Head, NDRU, Doctor of Political Science, Professor, introduced the guests the activities of the University at the Conference Hall, briefed in detail on the research (Institute for National Strategic Studies – INSS) and the educational (National Institute for Strategic Defense Security Education – NISDSE) components of the NDRU. As Professor Kotanjian stated, the educational process in the University evolved via the leading Western research universities' and institutes' model, as well as with the account of the Russian think tanks' practice, i.e., transferring the products of the academic-applied research as knowledge to the auditorium.

At the meeting Colonel Suren Davtyan, Head, NISDSE–Deputy Head in Education, NDRU, briefed on the educational activity of the University. Benyamin Poghosyan, Head, INSS–Deputy Head, NDRU, PhD in History, described the guests the security dynamics in the South Caucasus and neighboring region. Vahram Petrosyan, Senior Research

Fellow, Center for Regional Strategic Analysis, INSS, NDRU, PhD in History, provided with the analysis of the Kurdish factor in the region. The research conducted in the IT and cyberspace security by the INSS Center for National Security Policy and Information-Communication Technologies was introduced by Arman Grigorian, Head of the center, and PhD in Engineering. He in particular noted the NDRU-elaborated projects of the National Cybersecurity Strategy and that of adapting and implementing in Armenia the Chief Information Officer (CIO) system.

With the reports completed, the guests addressed questions to the NDRU specialists about the RA's balanced foreign policy, the prospective of the Karabakh conflict regulation, relations between the RA and Iran, Armenia's integration possibilities into China's "One Belt-One Road" initiative, as well as the latest domestic political developments. The guests emphasized the role that the NDRU, MOD, RA plays as a platform for strategic dialogue in academic-expert format between Armenia's ally and partner states in terms of the evolving conflict between the RF and the West.

At the end of the meeting members of the Munich University emphasized their eagerness to develop cooperation between the two universities.



Armenia to host regional conference on disaster losses

2018 SUB-REGIONAL PLATFORM
ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
Central Asia and South Caucasus

26-27 June 2018
Yerevan, Armenia



The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) announced that Armenia will host countries from Central Asia and the South Caucasus in June to discuss scaling up efforts to reduce disaster losses.

The UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ms. Mami Mizutori, said: "This region is severely affected by disasters including earthquakes, landslides, floods, droughts and extreme temperatures, man-made and technological hazards. In the last three decades, disasters have affected almost 4 million people in the region and resulted

in annual average losses of EUR 250 million. This meeting will be an opportunity to review progress in Europe on implementing the global plan to reduce disaster losses, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction."

The 2018 Sub-Regional Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, June 26-27, will bring together Ministers, Mayors, private sector, academia, international organizations, civil society and delegates from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan under the theme "An integrated platform for sustainable development and building resilience."

Mr. Hrachya Rostomyan, the Minister of Emergency Situations, Armenia, said: "Armenia welcomes the opportunity to host this important gathering. Disaster risk management is a priority for our government and the conference will give a strong boost towards the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Central Asia and South Caucasus."

Ms. Paola Albritto, Chief of UNISDR's Regional Office for Europe, said: "This year's focus on sustainable development is key. Coherence in implementing action on reducing disaster risk with the international agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement on Climate Change, is fundamental. We cannot achieve sustainable development without reducing disaster risk."

VivaCell-MTS: The Dream of Families from Regions of Armenia to Have their Own Houses will be Realized in 2018 as Well

The settlement of issues that have become a social burden helps to improve the quality of a family's life. Especially those living in regions feel its need most; the desire to build a home

partnering organizations have signed the contract for the current year.

"The decision has been made, the contract has been signed. This year, too, we will

us to specify the calculations, but when we see how the families, who have overcome the problem of housing many years ago, confidently set new dreams now, we try to be help-

"This is a program the result of which is assessed through the change in the life quality, through the sparkle of faith towards the future in the eyes of the families. Although con-



becomes a reason for them to look for a solution abroad choosing the way of emigration. To preserve the country as a homeland, however, they need to stay on their own land and have the faith to dream, live and succeed. The families who have solved the housing problems in different regions of Armenia are trying to set new goals and achieve them.

The housing program implemented by VivaCell-MTS and Fuller Center for Housing Armenia has proven its effec-



siderable work has been done, we evaluate the years of cooperation with a more important criterion, that is - awakening faith in a bright future in people's hearts," shared the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia President **Ashot Yeghiazaryan**.

The mechanisms of the cooperation are clear: the list of families to be included in the program is made by the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia, taking into account their social status, the presence of juveniles in the family, the crowdedness



tiveness over the years; homes were built or renovated in 56 communities for 150 families. It has been planned to continue the project in 2018, too. The

cooperate with the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia to fulfill the dream of our compatriots. The new challenges and the economic situation oblige

*ful to more families within the realms of our possibilities," said VivaCell-MTS Founding General Manager **Ralph C. Yirikian**.*

of the living space and a number of other criteria. VivaCell-MTS provides financial support, as well as participates voluntarily in the construction works.

Armenian American Museum announces major community-wide events

The Armenian American Museum Governing Board has announced three major community-wide events following Glendale City Council's historic approval including Museum Day on August 5, Telethon on September 9, and Gala Banquet on December 9, Asbarez reports.

The Armenian American Museum is a landmark project governed under the united leadership of ten leading Armenian American cultural, philanthropic, and religious non-profit institutions. In April 2018, the Glendale City Council agreed to negotiate the final Ground Lease Agreement for the Museum's Downtown Glendale site with a lease term of up to 95 years at \$1 per year, marking a major milestone for the project.

"We are excited to announce the Armenian American Museum's upcoming community-wide events and urge our community members to mark their calendars and participate to celebrate and support the project," stated Museum Executive Committee Chairman Berdj Karapetian.

The following community-wide events have been scheduled:

Museum Day – Sunday, August 5, 2018

The Armenian American Museum Day will bring together hundreds of community members for a special ceremony and celebration to mark the historic day at the future site of the cultural and educational center in Downtown Glendale's Central Park.

Telethon – Sunday, September 9, 2018

The Telethon will be live broadcasted from Los Angeles and streamed online worldwide to educate the public on the Armenian American Museum and raise awareness for the historic project. Proceeds will benefit the construction of the Museum.

Gala Banquet – Sunday, December 9, 2018

The Gala Banquet at the prestigious Ray Dolby Ballroom in Hollywood will be the signature event of the year for the Armenian American Museum. The inaugural event will bring together donors, support-

ers, public officials, and community leaders for a memorable evening to celebrate and support the landmark project.

The Armenian American Museum is a developing project in Glendale, CA with a mission to promote understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Armenian American experience. When completed, it will serve as a cultural campus that enriches the community, educates the public on the Armenian American story, and empowers individuals to embrace cultural diversity and speak out against prejudice.

The governing board of the Armenian American Museum consists of representatives from the following ten Armenian American institutions and organizations: Armenian Catholic Eparchy, Armenian Cultural Foundation, Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, Armenian General Benevolent Union – Western District, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Relief Society – Western USA, Nor Or Charitable Foundation, Nor Serount Cultural Association, Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, and Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

**A fruit garden meant for agricultural purposes is on sale
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and irrigation it also has gas and electricity.**

**Moreover the road leading to the garden is covered
with asphalt and there is a farm house and
a greenhouse nearby.**

**For further information phone
099 10 54 53**

Zodiac Weekly Forecast



Aries (March 20–April 19)

Your attention naturally shifts toward plans for the future and finding ways to meet your goals. The probability is high that you will be leading or joining activities that call for cooperation from one or more groups of people for the next several weeks.



Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

Plan to work and play alone early in the 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 with moderation.



Gemini (May 20–June 20)

This is a particularly busy week for the Mercurial Gemini's. You will need to be Twins to cover all your bases. The sun returns "home" to your sign now. You likely will find it to be energizing. Now is the time to focus on new plans for this next year of your life. Take a fresh look at where you want to direct your energy.



Cancer (June 21–July 21)

Venus enters your sign this week and will be traveling "with you" until June 13. Her presence gives you an air of poise and people will simply like how you look. Often when Venus is prominent we become more interested in anything which adds beauty to our lives.



Leo (July 22–August 21)

A small cycle change this week shifts your attention to the areas of community, contacts, and broader social relationships. You may become more involved with other people's children for a few weeks. This is a good time to develop your network of contacts. A snafu in paperwork or communications on or near the 18th will be resolved within a week.



Virgo (August 22–September 22)

You are one busy Virgo this week. Your planetary avatar, Mercury, is flitting from one aspect to the next and covering a lot of territory. This is happening in your 9th sector of exploration, travel, the internet, publishing, education and matters of the law. You probably will experience increased energy when dealing with these areas.



Libra (Sep. 23–Oct. 22)

For the next 3.5 weeks your activities are on display. Others are noticing your performance, so make it great. You may be standing in the limelight. Your leadership gifts come to the foreground at this time.



Scorpio (October 23–November 21)

Your focus shifts at this time to matters of home, property, and family. Through the summer you may be handling heavy work around your home, and/or making repairs. Your temper will be short if you don't pour big muscle energy into something.



Sagittarius (November 22–December 20)

You may need to deal with an old wound or emotional injury related to a lover or child. If you are disturbed by someone in either type of relationship, it is time to look inside yourself for the true causative agent. Likely it is buried in the past. If the past situation had not happened, you would not be so hurt now.



Capricorn (December 21–January 19)

This is an excellent time to pursue any activity that requires your mental concentration. The Goats are not always able to sit still enough to learn theoretical information, but right now there is a window open for it. Contracts and written communications, along with short distance travel, have go signals. Thumbs up on love life.



Aquarius (January 20–February 17)

Mars, the warrior energy, enters your sign now and through the summer. It routinely spends 6 weeks in each sign, but it will do a retrograde twirl before it leaves you. You will need to be more conscious of setting boundaries around yourself. Speak up about what you will and will not do. You may feel edgy and quick on the trigger. Maybe this is useful at this time.



Pisces (February 18–March 19)

There is an old saying: "Don't believe everything you think." Take this one to heart this week. Your feelings and thoughts may be only projections of what you want to think. You might identify a piece of information as a truth, when indeed, it is merely your opinion.

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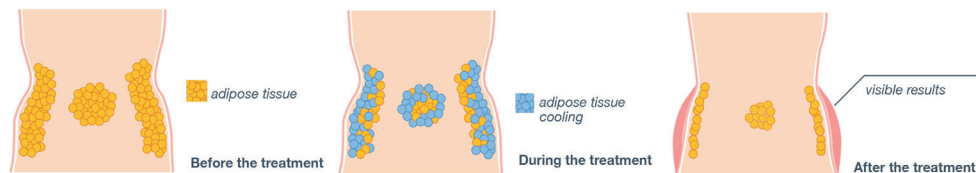
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