



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

POLITICS

1. ARMEN ASHOTIAN: ARFD TRIES TO CLEAN ITSELF OF PRO-GOVERNMENTAL PARTY'S IMAGE BEFORE 2012 ELECTIONS [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 04/27/09]

ARFD tries to come out of the ruling coalition for the purpose of cleaning itself of pro-governmental party's image before the 2012 elections. Armen Ashotian, a member of the RA National Assembly RPA faction, expressed such an opinion at the March 27 press conference. However, in his opinion, for ARFD it will be very difficult to clean itself of pro-governmental party's image, as Dashnaktsutiun has been a non-formal power since 1991. "It is difficult to say how well they will manage to return their former image among society's opposition sector within three years," he said.

According to A. Ashotian, the current development of Armenian-Turkish relations is a good occasion for Dashnaktsutiun for coming out of power on the pretext of national ideology. At the same time he said that ARFD's referring to change of Armenia's foreign policy does not correspond to reality. According to the RPA deputy, it is rather an occasion than a deep cause of principle.

According to A. Ashotian's prediction, ARFD's appearing in the opposition sphere will create a new situation in the home political sphere in the respect of quality. According to him, ARFD becoming an opposition will deprive Armenian National Congress of monopoly position in that sphere, as well as will deprive the Zharangutiun party of the unique status of being the only parliamentary opposition.

2. EDWARD NALBANDYAN "OUR STRIVE IS FRANK AND RESOLUTE: ARMENIA SEEKS TO ESTABLISH FULL RELATIONS WITH TURKEY WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS" [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

Armenian Foreign Affairs Minister Edward Nalbandyan gave interview to the director of Armenpress news agency Hrayr Zoryan.

Mr. Minister, first of all I would like to thank You for accepting my interview request. Headed by You Armenia's foreign policy has become quite active.

I would like to point out that our foreign policy is headed by the President of the country and I am heading the Foreign Affairs Ministry the main mission of which is to carry out the issues forwarded by the President of the Republic.

Being a chairman-in-office in different international organizations You receive numerous guests, pay different visits. One of distinguished diplomats said if foreign minister of a country does not pay visits, the country does not have foreign policy. The geography of Your visits is wide, it even includes Turkey, which seems to be a new thing for us.

I do not think that it is a new thing, because for years after the independence of Armenia there have always been contacts between Armenia and Turkey, various visits of high-ranked officials took place and Armenia has always been seeking normalization of relations with Turkey without preconditions.

How will You assess the current round of the Armenian-Turkish relations, especially taking into consideration the opinions that our relations have never gone so far?

I would say have never been so close, really because on the initiative of the President of Armenia when the President of Turkey Abdullah Gul was invited to visit Armenia to watch football match a qualitatively new round launched in the process of normalization of relations. Very important meetings took place between Armenian and Turkish presidents, besides an important meeting took place in Davos between Armenian President and Turkish Prime Minister, at about ten meetings took place on the level of foreign ministers of the two countries, and today we came to the statement made April 22 which registers progress in negotiation process.

There are opinions that this statement was a surprise and there are even opinions on being deceived.

But how can it be spoken about a surprise or about being deceived? You know, for months the President of the country and the foreign minister have stated many times that Armenia is seeking establishment of full relations with Turkey, normalization of relations with Turkey without preconditions and today with that statement we again note that we are going towards the normalization of relations, opening of the borders without any preconditions. In this case how it can be spoken about being deceived.



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You say that there are no preconditions, but still different comments and opinions are voiced from Turkey and in Armenia there are opinions that we are making concessions.

You know, there is such an impression as if we do not believe ourselves, we have lack of trust towards our strength, our opportunities, we do not believe that Armenia, really, may register a progress, we always think that if we have reached something good it means that a bad thing is hidden under it. That is to say, if we have climbed the tree, we must by all means fall on a stone, or we think that we must be cheated by all means. Who will cheat us? If it is Turkey, first of all it will cheat itself, international community, United States, Russia, EU. Our strive is frank and resolute: Armenia seeks establishment of full relations with Turkey without preconditions. I think that we have an impression that the leadership of Turkey wishes to go forward and normalize relations between the two countries too.

The statement was publicized April 22, on the eve of 94th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, which also gave way to different comments. How will You comment on it?

When we say normalization of relations without preconditions, we mean that there are no preconditions connected with the Nagorno Karabakh conflict regulation and no preconditions on recognition of the genocide and the normalization of relations does not put under question the fact of the genocide and the President of the country, foreign minister have many times stated about it. You know, I hope that when we improve, normalize our relations, not only leadership of our country will put flowers in Tsitsernakaberd but the Turkish leadership will join us. Why cannot we do what Charles de Gaulle and Adenauer did? I am sure that such a day will come and Armenian and Turkish leaderships will make that step. And when will it be convenient to make such step if we reach that day? May be in very April? I think there may be some symbol in it. And may be there is a symbol in making the statement April 22.

Nevertheless why at night of April 22?

You mean why at night? You know in diplomacy there is neither afternoon, nor night, nor morning, nor evening conception. In general, negotiations have their logic, which bring to some haven, corresponding progress about which public is being informed. I remember in France in the process of recognition of genocide, when the law on recognition of the genocide was being adopted in the Senate the discussions were going on in midnight and the decision was made at 04.00 am and no one was surprised and no one asked "why the discussions were at night and the decision made in the morning?".

There is an opinion that Armenia is going to the establishment of relations with Turkey because the events which took place in Georgia last year and the global economic crisis did not leave any other choice to Armenia and it has to find common language with Turkey.

You know quite well that the initiative of the President of the Republic of Armenia was made months ago, months before what happened in Ossetia and when Armenia's economy was registering double-digit development just like during the previous 7-8 years. Thus, it is not so: this decision was made with full sense that we must normalize our relations with Turkey.

Road map concept caused a certain confusion. What does this document present from itself? What points, principles does it have?

It is a very clear agreement: the road map – is a time guide for the steps which the sides must undertake so that the achieved arrangements enter into force and start being implemented and there are no points and principles in that map. Points and principles will be in the agreement or agreements which must be signed between the sides.

How will You comment on international responses to the Armenian-Turkish relations?

You know, if we were living in Soviet, USSR days, we would say that all the progressive humanity welcomes Armenia's steps. But today, we really may say that many countries, EU, United States, Russia, Switzerland, which was a mediator, not only welcome but assist in the process. May be there is one country which has some restraints and may be not small: it is Azerbaijan. This I think is a wrong approach as normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations may have only positive impact on our whole region and Azerbaijan is part of that region.

How will You comment on the usage of the "Meds Yeghern" phrase by Barack Obama in his address to the Armenian people?

First of all I would like to say that the statement of Obama is a step forward as compared with the statements made by other presidents of the United States. There are very strong points in this statement. President Obama said that he has many times expressed his approach towards what happened in 1915 and he has not changed his opinion. President Obama used "Meds Yeghern" phrase, we – Armenians – use either "genocide" or "Meds Yeghern" concepts. But of course, all Armenians were waiting from the US President to utter the word "genocide". As far as we are speaking about the President of the United States, I would also like to point out the important personal assistance the US President displays for the normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations.



During the recent period the negotiation process within the frameworks of the OSCE Minsk group has activated. Once in a month the co-chairs are visiting the region: Yerevan, Stepanakert, Baku, they also pay visits separately. Nevertheless there is an impression as if the process stamps in the place. Do You agree with that opinion?

Yes, the co-chairs are in Yerevan today as well, the process continues and you know that for months Azerbaijan was refusing to conduct negotiations on the basis of Madrid principles and was trying to impose the resolution which was adopted by the UN General Assembly with the suggestion of Azerbaijan. But You know as well that the co-chairing countries voted against it and neither of the EU countries backed the resolution and only 39 of 192 member countries voted for it. Azerbaijan for months was trying to impose this resolution as a basis of negotiations. Azerbaijan was speaking only about one point: territorial integrity, military rhetoric was voiced in Azerbaijan. During the recent period many statements have been approved by international organizations, in different instances which correspond to our approaches. During the recent months no resolution has been adopted over Karabakh which would not correspond to our positions: be it the Moscow declaration, under which are the signatures of the President of the Republic of Armenia, President of Azerbaijan and President of Russia: in spite of it in a few days Azerbaijan put under question several points of the declaration. Three declarations have been adopted in Helsinki in early December, by the 56 OSCE foreign ministers, foreign ministers of the Minsk group co-chairing countries and the EU. And these three statements, declarations correspond to our positions and we fully share the opinions expressed in that statements and support them and find that if we move according to these documents, maybe we will have a progress. At the beginning of the year Azerbaijan tried to make certain steps in UN, unconstructive steps, started disseminating memorandums – four memorandums, which in fact created another serious obstacle in the negotiation process. The Minsk group co-chairing countries condemned that step. Today there is a certain positive tendency in the Karabakh process as the same president of Azerbaijan states already about the regulation of the Karabakh issue on the basis of international right. And it is really an important positive tendency. Three meetings have been held between the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents – in Saint Petersburg, Moscow and Zurich and in near future another one will take place. We hope that the coming meeting will be positive and constructive and will give an opportunity to activate the negotiations, move forward and make the positions of the conflicting parties closer.

Different comments, analyses are voiced on Armenian-Turkish relations, Karabakh conflict regulation process causing confusion: I hope that our interview made many issues clear.

I would like to say that I pay great attention to all the opinions voiced by analysts, and I am trying to use positive suggestions and ideas existing in the analyses. But there are also such analyses which say – we don't know what you are doing, but what you are doing you are doing it wrong. You do it wrong because it is not we who are doing it, and what we would have done we will not tell you – it is like the person says I will not enter into water until I learn swimming, and so not learning swimming he gives advises, or makes remarks about the dangers of drowning. The leadership of the state must have courage to take responsibility and make important decisions and implement them. Today the international community treats Armenia with respect. I say with respect and not use exciting words like “they love us” or “they do not love us”: they treat us with respect and it is natural in respect that we are a state, we have our interests, our issues, and we are also trying to understand issues of other countries. And we are trying by combing these interests find such solutions which will be good for all. And first of all for us, the important thing is that those solutions be effective and favorable for the sake of our people and the state.

3. ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION COMES OUT OF THE POLITICAL COALITION [Azg, 04/28/09]

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) declares about the suspension of its participation in the political coalition. With this statement the representatives of ARF party come out of all the political and concept offices. During April 27 press conference the representative of ARF highest body Armen Rustamian officially informed about this.

The ARF reasoned such a step by “insuperable principle discord” which arouse over the foreign political line and is connected with “the adoption of a joint statement on the eve of April 24 by Armenian and Turkish foreign ministers within the context of anti-Armenian preconditions of Turkish authorities”.

“We have always been sure that one of the directions of country's national security strategy is the general recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide, particularly by Turkey. This has been regarded not only within the context of restoration of historical justice but also within the improvement of the atmosphere of mutual trust in the region and prevention of such crimes in the future”, - the ARF's April 27 statement says.



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A. Rustamian informed that on Saturday they met with the Armenian President Serzh Sargsian and discussed the established situation. The Armenian President noted that he will continue the present political line of development of relations between Armenia and Turkey and at the same time assured that he will not allow conditioning the Armenian-Turkish relations by the regulation of Nagorno Karabakh issue nor will the process of recognition of the Armenian Genocide be speculated.

S. Sargsian denied the five points of the “roadmap” which are in circulation in the Turkish press. But A. Rustamian noted that the discords are insuperable and functioning through the coalition format the ARF can no more implement the issues and aims which are considered to be the main line of the Party. He noted that being an opposition does not mean not to support the authorities in numerous issues.

According to the representative of ARF highest body the Armenian foreign policy in fact consists of two most important issues – recognition of the Armenian Genocide and regulation of Nagorno Karabakh issue. In this context he stressed the importance of correct juxtaposing of national and state interests.

According to A. Rustamian recognition of the Armenian Genocide must be implemented in two parallel directions – international and Turkish recognition, but we must not allow one process to be replaced by the other.

“Turkey dreams of suspending the international process of recognition of the Armenian Genocide and transporting it to a field of bilateral relations. Turkey has never refused to speak in a language of preconditions and only changes the character of these preconditions: if formerly it was through deadlines now it functions with a mask”, - the representative of ARF highest body noted.

Expressing the ARF position on the Nagorno Karabakh issue A. Rustamian noted that with the 1991 and 2005 referendums the Nagorno Karabakh people have definitely set the limit from which the authorities must not concede. According to 1991 referendum it was fixed that Nagorno Karabakh must not have a status less than the independence. According to the 2005 referendum the negotiation and legal status of liberated territories was fixed, which definitely mentions that Nagorno Karabakh has an issue of restoration of its territorial integrity as 20% of Nagorno Karabakh territories are still occupied by Azerbaijan. Based on all these the ARF finds that the issues of Nagorno Karabakh status and security are primary.

A. Rustamian noted that the ARF sees no issue for cooperation with the “Heritage” party but he excluded the cooperation with the Armenian National Congress as the ARF has no ideology generalities with the ANC. According to him the ANC makes statements based on its political interests and the given situation.

Referring to the April 24 address of the US President Barack Obama A. Rustamian expressed opinion that if there was no April 22 statement B. Obama would have a great difficulty in refusing to uttering the “Genocide” word. And the “Meds Yeghern” phrase of the US President does not have the legal consequences the word “Genocide” would have.

4. THE NA INTENDS DISCUSSIONS ON THE ARMENIAN-TURKISH RELATIONS [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

The National Assembly will by all means refer to the prospects of Armenian-Turkish relations the NA Speaker Hovik Abrahamian said in response to the suggestion of the MPs of “Heritage” faction to discuss the issue in an extraordinary or special session of the NA.

The NA Speaker noted that it has not yet been decided when and in what format the discussions will be held: during the upcoming two days they will consult with factions and decide. “I suggest it to be a constructive discussion”, - the NA Speaker added. At the same time he added that he defends the foreign policy held by the Armenian authorities.

More than four dozens of issues are involved in the plenary session of the parliament which kicked off April 27.

5. PARLIAMENTARY FORCES TREAT THE DECISION OF ARF ON COMING OUT OF THE POLITICAL COALITION WITH RESPECT [Aravot, 04/28/09]

The parliamentary forces treat the decision of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) to come out of the political coalition with respect. There is mainly such an assessment to the decision by all the parliamentary forces.

“We approach the viewpoints of our partners with understanding not agreeing with many issues. Probably they are troubled and tried to find such a solution. But I must say that no changes took place in the political principles including in respect of Armenian-Turkish relations”, - head of the faction of



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Armenian Republican Party Galust Sahakian told April 27 journalists stressing that Armenia is for establishment relations with Turkey without preconditions and it by no means refers to the Nagorno Karabakh and Genocide issues.

Head of the "Prosperous Armenia" faction Gagik Tsarukian said that "the ARF has its principles based on which it made its step". He reminded numerous statements of the Armenian President to establish relations with Turkey without any preconditions and added that if there are preconditions the "Prosperous Armenia" party will also come out of the coalition. "We lose nothing by establishing relations with Turkey without preconditions", - he noted.

Khachik Harutyunian, a member of "Orinats Yerkir" faction which is another coalitional force, noted that they refer to the ARF decision with respect: "The Armenian Revolutionary Federation has its ideology and approaches on different issues and directly understanding them we treat the decision with respect".

Founder of "Heritage" Party, an MP Raffi Hovhannisian considered the ARF decision as "postponed and principle" which is a step which corresponds to the principles and values of that political power because especially for ARF the issue of Armenian-Turkish relations, pursue of the Armenian Justice is close to heart.

He also noted that during this week the "Heritage" will address its questions to the authorities and it is expected that the authorities will open the details of April 22 statement for the public.

R. Hovhannisian greets the entrance of ARF into the opposition.

6. PRESIDENT SERZH SARGSYAN RECEIVES DELEGATION OF PARTICIPANTS OF THIRD REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RUSSIAN COMPATRIOTS LIVING IN SOUTH CAUCASUS [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

President Serzh Sargsyan received delegation of the participants of the Third Regional Conference of the Russian Compatriots living in the South Caucasus which is being conducted in Yerevan.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that welcoming the participants of the conference, President Sargsyan said that Armenia was a country with huge Diaspora and thus had a perfect understanding of the role, significance, and the potential of the compatriot organizations. Serzh Sargsyan noted that during his visits abroad he almost always meets with the representatives of Diaspora. "I repeat constantly that to be a good Armenian, they should first be good citizens of their resident country," stressed the President of Armenia. According to him, only integrated diasporas, which carry their share of social and political responsibility, can be respected and valuable to their historic motherland.

Participants of the meeting mentioned that recently Russian has been paying considerable attention to the problems of the compatriots living abroad, implementing different assistance programs. In particular, they spoke about activities directed at the popularization of the Russian language.

The parties stressed the high level of the Armenian-Russian cooperation in the humanitarian area. They agreed that this kind of organizations serve as a bridge and bring their contribution to the strengthening of the bilateral relations.

7. PRESIDENT SERZH SARGSYAN RECEIVES OSCE MINSK GROUP CO-CHAIRS [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

President Serzh Sargsyan received April 27 the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group Matthew Bryza (USA), Yuri Merzlyakov (Russia), Bernard Fassier (France), and the Personal representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Andrzej Kasperzyk. Armenian Foreign Affairs Minister Edward Nalbandian was also present at the meeting.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that during the meeting the parties discussed the current stage of the NK peace process and issues pertaining to a probable meeting between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The President of Armenia stressed once again that Armenia views the resolution of the NK conflict exclusively in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group, through peaceful negotiations, and in accordance with all fundamental principles of international law.



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8. ARMENIAN FM HAS A PHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE US SECRETARY OF STATE [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

On the initiative of the American side the Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian yesterday had a phone conversation with the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Media relations department of the Armenian Foreign Ministry told Armenpress that during the phone conversation the sides discussed issues connected with the development of Armenian-USA relations.

During the conversation they also referred to the process of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations and Karabakh conflict negotiations. The Secretary of State Clinton greeted the joint statement of Armenian, Turkish and Swiss Foreign Ministries assessing it as a historical step towards the establishment of normal relations between the two states.

Hillary Clinton expressed her support towards the negotiation process within the frameworks of the Minsk Group and expressed hope that a progress will be registered in this process.

9. NATO WELCOMES STEPS DIRECTED TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF ARMENIAN-TURKISH RELATIONS [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan received today Assistant of the NATO Secretary General, Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero.

Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that greeting the guest Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan noted that Armenia is planning to consolidate and develop mutually beneficial cooperation with NATO within the framework of Partnership for Peace program.

Edward Nalbandian underscored Armenia-NATO Individual Partnership Action Plan program as a format of effective cooperation. The foreign minister also noted that Armenia will continue cooperation with NATO in peacekeeping, fighting against international terrorism, elimination of consequences of natural disasters and in other directions.

C. Bisogniero, underscoring the development of cooperation with Armenia, said that North-Atlantic Alliance highly assesses Armenia's activity and the results of 2006-2008 IPAP. The NATO official presented to the Armenian foreign minister the results of the NATO Strasburg Summit.

The guest also said that he is pleased with the progress registered in the normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations, pointing out that NATO welcomes the steps directed towards establishment of relations between Armenia and Turkey.

10. TENDENCIES OF PROCESS ACCELERATION OUTLINED IN NAGORNO KARABAKH SETTLEMENT PROCESS [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

Tendencies of process acceleration are outlined in the Nagorno Karabakh settlement process. OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs stated at the April 27 press conference. They expressed the hope that the meeting of RA and Azeri Presidents to be held on May 7 in Prague will be constructive.

MG French Co-chair Bernard Fassier drew attention to much activation of Co-chairs' visits to the region and three meetings between Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in the past months. "There are reasonable hopes for progress, and these hopes prompt us that Prague meeting will be constructive. Everything depends on the two Presidents' will," B. Fassier stated.

American Co-chair Matthew Bryza also expressed an analogous point of view. At the same time he refuted the assertion that U.S. State Secretary Hillary Clinton made a statement about the possibility of that problem's solution within a month. "My leader stated that the conflict may be solved within several months," he said.

According to MG Russian Co-chair Yuri Merzliakov, there are all conditions for ensuring advance in the process of conflict settlement. As to the possibility of Nagorno Karabakh conflict settlement in the nearest time, Y. Merzliakov noted that time predictions is the most difficult thing. In his words, everything will depend on the decision the sides, in particular, Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan, will make on the fundamental or basic principles of settlement. The Russian diplomat said that after coordination of these principles by the sides work will be done to work out a peaceful agreement.

"Madrid principles" remain on the table, the Presidents continue discussing them, discussion of many of these points is planned during Prague meeting," B. Fassier stated. In his words, if necessary, a new meeting between Serzh Sargsyan and Ilham Aliyev will be organized in early June in Saint Petersburg. He also expressed conviction that both Presidents intend to prepare the public opinion in their countries for the purpose of forming an atmosphere of good neighborly relations.



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M. Bryza said that both Presidents proceed from the fact that an agreement on Nagorno Karabakh settlement should be balanced and based on principles of self-determination, territorial integrity and exclusion of use of force.

11. OSCE MINSK GROUP CO-CHAIRS CONVINCED THAT START OF NORMALIZATION OF ARMENIAN-TURKISH RELATIONS WILL HAVE POSITIVE IMPACT ON NAGORNO KARABAKH SETTLEMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

The OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs are sure that the start of the process on normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations will have a positive impact on the process of Nagorno Karabakh settlement. They stated it at the April 27 press conference.

MG French Co-chair Bernard Fassier said that the mediators have no right to comment upon the "road map" signed between Armenia and Turkey on April 22. At the same time, according to him, the signing of that document became the first step aimed at normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations. "That document means the start of a new process, which will require much time. We hope that this process will create a favorable climate for settlement of Nagorno Karabakh conflict. And we, mediators, parallel with this process should exert all efforts for solving the Nagorno Karabakh problem," the French diplomat stated.

As to a connection between the process of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations and Nagorno Karabakh settlement, B. Fassier reminded that the Armenian authorities have repeatedly denied existence of such a connection.

American Co-chair Matthew Bryza stated: "The document signed between Armenia and Turkey had a good impact on increase of a positive energy in the region. In its turn, that energy will contribute to Nagorno Karabakh conflict settlement. We think that both processes, normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations and Nagorno Karabakh settlement, will proceed separately, that is, parallelly but with different speeds."

12. ARMEN ASHOTIAN: SERIOUS PROGRESS WAS RECORDED IN ARMENIA'S FOREIGN POLICY LATELY [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

Dynamic developments are noticed in Armenia's foreign policy lately, and no step has been taken against country's national interests. Armen Ashotian, a member of the RA NA RPA faction, said at the April 27 press conference. In his words, President Serzh Sargsyan carried out intensive diplomatic policy with a number of countries, including the U.S., RF, and IRI.

In A. Ashotian's opinion, progress was also recorded in the issue of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations. "From 1993 Turkey has closed its border with Armenia and showed that it is the supporter of Azerbaijan in the issue of problem's solution. Armenia's diplomatic success is that the issue of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations is already separated from the Nagorno Karabakh settlement," A. Ashotian said.

Speaking about U.S. President Barack Obama's April 24 address, A. Ashotian said that it is obviously a step forward as compared with former U.S. Presidents' addresses. In his words, Obama classed the events of 1915 as Mets Yeghern, which is a synonym of the word "genocide".

13. ARMENIA SEES NAGORNO KARABAKH SETTLEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL BASIC PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

On April 27, RA President Serzh Sargsyan received OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs Matthew Bryza (U.S.), Yuri Merzliakov (Russia), Bernard Fassier (France), and Personal Representative of OSCE Chairman-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk. They discussed issues regarding the current stage of Nagorno Karabakh peaceful settlement negotiations process, as well as organization of a possible meeting between RA and Azeri Presidents in the future. S. Sargsyan once more stressed that Armenia sees Nagorno Karabakh settlement exclusively within the framework of OSCE Minsk Group, through peaceful negotiations, in accordance with all basic principles of international law.

According to the report of the RA President's Press Office, RA Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian also took part in the meeting.



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14. NATO WELCOMES STEPS AIMED AT ESTABLISHMENT OF NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ARMENIA AND TURKEY [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

Armenia intends to strengthen and to develop mutually beneficial cooperation with NATO within the framework of the Partnership for Peace program. RA Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian stated at the April 28 meeting with Ambassador, NATO Deputy Secretary General Claudio Bisogniero. He welcomed Armenia-NATO Individual Partnership Actions Plan (IPAP) as a format of efficient cooperation. E. Nalbandian also stressed that Armenia will continue cooperating with NATO in the directions of peacekeeping, fighting international terrorism, liquidation of consequences of natural calamities, and in other directions.

Attaching importance to development of cooperation with Armenia, Claudio Bisogniero said that NATO highly assesses Armenia's partnership and the 2006-2008 results of IPAP implementation and expressed the hope that the 2009-2010 Actions Plan will be also implemented successfully.

According to the report of the RA Foreign Ministry Press and Information Department, in the context of discussion of regional issues Claudio Bisogniero expressed satisfaction with the progress recorded in the process of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations. He emphasized that NATO welcomes steps aimed at establishment of normal relations between Armenia and Turkey.

15. ALIK SARGSIAN: NORTHERN AVENUE BELONGS TO PEOPLE, AND EVERYBODY CAN WALK THERE [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 04/28/09]

Yerevan Northern Avenue belongs to the people, and everybody can walk there, and it is not important under what authorities this or that building was built. RA Police Chief, Police Major-General Alik Sargsian stated at the April 28 press conference.

It should be mentioned that at the end of the April 22 meeting of the Public Council attached to Police the Police Chief had advised the opposition to look for another place for political walks. A. Sargsian had said that Northern Avenue was built under the current authorities, therefore for political walks the opposition can look for another place built under the former authorities.

A. Sargsian made it clear saying that in an intimate talk with a journalist after the April 22 meeting he only joked: "In what street do we have a right to walk if 90% was built under the communists?" the Police Chief said. In his words, his demand on Northern Avenue was only not to violate public order, to hold mass events within the law and not to turn them into mass disorders. He advised journalists not to cling to words, not to turn friendly talks into a serious political statement and not to involve him into politics. "The Police are a depoliticized structure," he said.

A. Sargsian refuted the information in press that the day before policemen gathered the leaflets notifying on opposition's May 1 rally. "No policeman gathered any leaflet from anybody, neither it protected people taking away leaflets," the Police Chief said.

16. ANC REPRESENTATIVE: UNLESS WE WIN LEGAL ELECTIONS WE WILL QUIETLY ACCEPT THAT DEFEAT [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

Armenia is on the threshold of very serious political developments, and for overcoming a number of challenges in the country the authorities should first create an atmosphere of national consent. Armenian National Congress representative Levon Zurabian gave assurance at the April 28 press conference. However, in his words, at present the authorities have chosen just the opposite way.

"They continue the repressive war against their own people launched on 2008 March 1: 55 political prisoners are kept in prisons, the rights of holding free gatherings and legal elections are violated," L. Zurabian said.

According to him, before solving all-national problems the Armenian authorities should solve problems within the nation. According to L. Zurabian, today we should consider not the "road map" of Armenian-Turkish relations, but the "road map" of internal national reconciliation. That is, according to him, the political prisoners should be released, democratic freedoms should be restored in the country, etc.

L. Zurabian said that holding legal elections of Yerevan Council of Elders on May 31 is an issue of principle for ANC. "Unless we win legal elections, we will accept that defeat quietly. However, already all processes show that the authorities are not ready for holding legal elections. They have already launched a huge process of offences," he said.



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17. ACCORDING TO ANC REPRESENTATIVE, ARFD SHOULD STILL GAIN RIGHT OF BEING REAL OPPOSITION [Haykakan Zhamanak, 04/28/09]

ARFD should still gain the right of being a real opposition. Armenian National Congress representative Levon Zurabian expressed such an opinion at the April 28 press conference adding that a statement on coming out of the ruling coalition is not enough for becoming an opposition.

"We have not noticed yet ARFD's coming out of the power. However I assess their step as the first sign of this regime's being not viable," he said. And if ARFD indeed chooses the way of becoming opposition of principle, L. Zurabian did not exclude that ANC can cooperate with it.

Touching upon the joint Armenian-Turkish statement, "road map," L. Zurabian said that according to information received from a reliable diplomatic source, the issue of establishing a commission of historians is also fixed in that document. L. Zurabian said that ANC has applied to the respective bodies to find out the details of the "road map," but has received no response so far. And that silence, according to him, gives an occasion for serious doubts.

18. COOPERATION WITH NATO IS ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF ARMENIA'S FOREIGN POLICY [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

RA President Serzh Sargsyan receiving Ambassador, NATO Deputy Secretary General Claudio Bisogniero on April 28, said that the European direction remains one of the priorities of Armenia's foreign policy, and cooperation with NATO is one of its most important elements. He considered cooperation with NATO within the framework of the Partnership for Peace program as a component of Armenia's national security.

Claudio Bisogniero, in his turn, said that they are content with the progress recorded in various spheres of NATO-Armenia partnership so far. He highly assessed the reforms carried out in the defence sphere, as well as Armenia's participation in a number of programs implemented within the framework of NATO, in particular, in the directions of fighting international terrorism, peacekeeping mission, and others.

According to the report of the RA President's Press Office, the interlocutors also exchanged thoughts over issues of ensuring security and stability in the region. S. Sargsyan considered important settlement of current conflicts and problems for improving the security environment.

C. Bisogniero said that NATO welcomes the Armenian-Turkish dialogue and progress recorded in that direction. As to the Nagorno Karabakh settlement, he said that though NATO is not directly involved in that process, it attentively follows those developments and welcomes any effort that will lead to problem's peaceful solution.

The sides held the same opinion that the conflict should be solved in accordance with all principles of international law: no principle can dominate or work at the expense of another.

19. SERZH SARGSYAN RECEIVES NATO TOP OFFICIAL [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan received April 28 Assistant of the NATO Secretary General, Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero.

The presidential press service told Armenpress that the president said that the European direction remains one of the Armenia's foreign political priorities and cooperation with NATO is one of its most important elements. Serzh Sargsyan viewed cooperation with NATO within the framework of Partnership for Peace program as one of parts of the national security of our country.

Claudio Bisogniero said that his visit witnesses the importance NATO gives to the relations with Armenia. He said that NATO is satisfied with the progress registered in the sphere of partnership with Armenia. C. Bisogniero highly underscored the reforms implemented in the defense sphere as well as Armenia's participation in a number of programs implemented by NATO, particularly in fighting against international terrorism, peacekeeping mission and in other directions.

The sides were unanimous that IPAP is a very good tool for moving the bilateral cooperation forward. The interlocutors exchanged thoughts on ensuring stability and security in the region. For improvement of the security environment President Sargsyan highlighted the regulation of existing conflicts and issues.

The NATO top-official said that NATO welcomes Armenian-Turkish dialogue and the progress registered in that direction.

Referring to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict regulation, he noted that though NATO is not directly involved in the process but it attentively follows the developments and greets every effort which will bring to the peaceful regulation of the conflict.



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The sides agreed that the conflict must be regulated in accordance with the all principles of the international right and no principle may dominate or function on the account of the other.

20. POLITICAL COALITION CALLS ON ARF TO PRESERVE THE OFFICES OF HEADS OF NA COMMISSIONS [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

The political coalition calls on the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) to take back the applications of resignation of heads of NA Permanent commissions of foreign relations and defense, national security and home affairs, NA Speaker Hovik Abrahamian stated, noting that there was a time when the NA Speaker was a representative of the opposition.

"We have even registered this opportunity in the October 2008 "NA Regulation" law by fixing the corresponding resolution which gives an opportunity to the representatives of the opposition to occupy the offices of heads of commissions and their deputies", - Hovik Abrahamian said and added that though the changes will function for the NA which will be formed in the next elections, but today the political coalition calls on the two heads of the commissions to preserve the offices.

Head of the ARF faction Vahan Hovhannisian thanked for the suggestion of the political coalition and noted that the issue is within the frameworks of implemented reforms and stated that they will discuss the issue and present the answers to the NA Speaker.

The Deputy NA Speaker Hrayr Karapetian, Head of the NA Commission of Foreign affairs Armen Rustamian and the NA Commission of Defense, national security and home affairs Arthur Aghabekian presented applications of resignation on April 27.

According to the "NA Regulation" law in case the applications are not taken back within three days the resignations will be considered adopted. The three-day period expires on April 30.

21. A. RUSTAMIAN SAYS PROVIDING OFFICES TO THE OPPOSITION IN THE PARLIAMENT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE INCREASE OF THE ROLE OF THE NA [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) will discuss the political coalition's suggestion over preserving the offices of Heads of NA Permanent Commissions during today's session of the ARF Highest body. Before that the representative of the highest body Armen Rustamian told journalists that for a long time they have been thinking that in the parliament the opposition must have an opportunity to conduct a full activity.

"It is adopted in the whole world, that's to say it must not seem unusual and be considered a natural process, it will be good if we put the basis of this", - he noted.

The representative of the highest body reminded that he was one of the co-authors of the autumn 2008 amendments in the "NA Regulation" law with which it has been set that the opposition also, according to the d'Ont's resolution, must get offices of heads and deputy heads of NA permanent commissions. According to A. Rustamian it will contribute to the increase of the NA role, as the destination of the NA is that the disputes be transported into the parliament and not be resolved in the street.

Referring to the statements of the Armenian National Congress according to which the ARF became an opposition, A. Rustamian noted that the issues they intend to solve being into the opposition need time "but as soon as these issues are being solved it will become clear that we take the field irrespective of anyone's wish".

"I do not understand figures of the opposition or the political forces who instead of directing their fight to the authorities-opposition field, direct it to the opposition field. These statements once more convince me that at this moment we have serious discords of political views, approaches and style of activity with the Armenian National Congress", - he added.

BUSINESS

22. ARMENIAN PRIME MINISTER GETS ACQUAINTED WITH THE PRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF DEVELOPMENT OF "NAIRIT FACTORY" CJSC [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

Accompanied by the Armenian Ministers of Economy, Energy and Natural Resources and the head of the Government's staff the Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian visited yesterday the "Nairit Factory" CJSC, walked round the workshops, got acquainted with the present productive abilities as well as the opportunities of development of the factory.



Public relations department of the Armenian government told Armenpress that the prime minister has with gratification stressed that today "Nairit" works, produces rubber, and now the most urgent issue is the discovery of the real abilities of the factory and increase of productivity, particularly the organization of production of rubber through the butadiene technology as well.

Tigran Sargsian stressed that "Nairit" has big opportunities of development not only in production of rubber, but also of other numerous types of products and if, according to the worked out program, the factory works in all its capacity it will also contribute to the quick start of working of dozens of enterprises and creation of thousands of job places. Among the issue "Nairit" faces the prime minister also stressed the importance of involvement of qualified specialists.

"Nairit" has a significant importance for the state because with "Nairit" our industry acquires a new image in the structure of people's economy.

This is a factory which creates infrastructures; its activity gives an impetus to the chemical industry as together with "Nairit" the science also develops, we are able to input new technologies, organize a new production and different new enterprises can be established.

"On the whole the chemical industry is a prospective branch for Armenia, and without "Nairit" we will not be able to implement crucial programs in the chemical industry. For this reason the "Nairit" has a significant role for the state", - the prime minister said.

23. THE "SOUTH CAUCASIAN RAILWAYS" READY TO RESTORE THE RAILWAY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ARMENIA AND TURKEY AFTER THE POLITICAL DECISION OF OPENING OF THE BORDER [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

The "South Caucasian Railways" company is ready to restore the railway communication between Armenia and Turkey after the political decision on the opening of the border is made.

During yesterday's press conference assistant to the chief director of the company on the infrastructural issues Marat Khakov noted that after the concession agreement was reached, head of the council of directors of the company signed a decree according to which the company has taken up commitment to restore the infrastructures on the whole Armenian territory. In 2008 works were already conducted in the Gyumri-Akhurian sector which is bordering with Turkey and in 2009 the specialists have twice checked the condition of roads of that sector.

Certain attributes of the upper sector of the road have been replaced and a communicative net has been established to ensure the movement in the Akhurian station. Besides that the "Akhurian 2" station works on a technological regime.

The Gyumri-Kars railroad is in a technically working condition but has not been exploited since 1993, when Turkey made a decision to close the Armenian-Turkish border.

The "South Caucasian Railways" Company has taken up the concession management of the Armenian railways in 2008 for 30-year period (with a right to extend the treaty for another 10 years).

24. PROGRAMS OF DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN TAVUSH PROVINCE [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

Programs of development of tourism will be implemented in the Tavush province. For that aim a seminar on "Marketing and sale in the hosting business" was held one of these days in Ijevan which was organized within the frameworks of the "Compatible Armenian Private Sector" (CAPS) program financed by USAID. Officials, heads of information centers, hotels and resorts of a number of Armenian provinces, businessmen and representatives of media took part in the seminar.

The seminar was chaired by the Professor of Chair of Management of Tourism and Hosting of the USA State University of Virginia Mahmud Khan who has for more than 30 years been involved in conduction of researches, teaching and management works in the mentioned sphere.

She has worked out tutorial programs of hosting and tourism, conducted researches of the sphere in Malaysia, Australia, India Taiwan and USA. Ijevan has been selected a place for conduction of the seminar as, according to the organizers, Ijevan has wide prospects of development of tourism.

According to Professor M. Khan "ideas are like air-balloons, they work utmost well when they open". And because marketing is a creative sphere here one must also be guided by "the flight of free creative thoughts".

According to the specialist, the entrepreneurs must also smile very often as "the smile increases the value of the human face". During the seminar-discussion which lasted for nearly four hours businessmen and heads of information centers of the provinces presented their ideas over the tourism development in a shape of yet incomplete projects. In the nearest future they will be discussed with the



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specialists of CAPS program after which concrete programs towards the development of tourism will be implemented.

25. PRESENT CONDITION OF JEWELRY AND DIAMOND MAKING AND PROSPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN ARMENIA DISCUSSED [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

The Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian received today the director of the World Armenian Union of Jewelry Makers (WAUJM) Gagik Abrahamian, head of the Union Vardges Knajian (Switzerland), head of the Armenian Union of Jewelry and Diamond Makers Emil Grigorian as well as owners of leading Armenian private companies in the sphere of jewelry, diamond making and watch production Pier Akelian (Canada), Nazareth Sapunjian (Lebanon), Gagik Gevorkian (Russia), Hakob Minasian (USA) and Shahe Arslanian (Belgium).

Public relations department of the Armenian government told Armenpress that the present condition and prospects of development of the jewelry and diamond making in Armenia have been discussed.

Stressing the importance of working out and implementation of the strategy of development of the mentioned sphere in our country and combining of efforts of the business circles of Armenia and Diaspora the Prime minister greeted the establishment and promotion of an efficient dialogue between the Unions of Armenian and Diaspora jewelry makers especially in the conditions of present world financial crisis.

Tigran Sargsian expressed gratification that there already exists general understanding of the issue as well as interesting initiatives and suggestions towards the development of the sphere.

He particularly pointed out to the projects of establishment of a techno-park in Gyumri, establishment of free economic zones in the republic as well as negotiations which are held with the Russian government and outstanding companies of the diamond-making sphere – "AIRosa" and "Crystal" over development of cooperation in the sphere.

Participants of the meeting presented their plans for the upcoming two years as well as ideas and opinions on the practical cooperation to the Armenian Prime minister.

Stressing the importance of collaborative fight against the negative impacts of the world financial crisis they signified the cooperation in exchange of modern technologies and acquiring of markets of realization, organization of international representative exhibitions in Armenia for this aim as well as the opportunities of presentation in the exhibitions organized in other states jointly.

It has also been suggested to establish a fund in Armenia which will aim at preparation of qualified specialists in the spheres of jewelry, diamond making, watch production and marketing, creation of three-thousand-year history of the Armenian jewelry and presenting it to the world.

Heads of the leading Armenian companies of the sphere in abroad noted that the implementation of the presupposed programs will create an opportunity to make Armenia an international center of jewelry, diamond making and watch production and provide thousands of job places.

Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian noted that the discussed issues and made suggestions will attentively be studied, for the implementation of a part of them the opportunities of Gyumri techno-park will be used and in case of necessity new discussions will be held round certain issues.

The prime minister assured that the Armenian government is ready to support all the constructive initiatives and programs directed towards the development of the sphere.

DIASPORA

26. HRAIR HOVNANIAN IN HIS LETTER EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT TO OBAMA FOR NOT USING WORD "GENOCIDE" [NOYAN TAPAN, 04/28/09]

On April 24, 2009, Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly) Chairman Hrair Hovnanian sent a letter to President Barack Obama expressing profound disappointment that the President had omitted the word Genocide in his commemorative statement on the occasion of the 94th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. In his letter to President Obama Mr. Hovnanian reminded the President of his repeated promises to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Hovnanian in his letter mentioned: "Your use of Mets Yehern [Great Catastrophe] was an inadequate substitute for Armenian Genocide."

That same afternoon, Vice-President Joseph Biden, Jr. telephoned Chairman Hovnanian and they exchanged views on the history and status of Armenian-American community efforts to obtain affirmation by the U.S. government of the Armenian Genocide.



SOCIAL

27. TWO-DAY CONFERENCE OF RUSSIAN ORGANIZATIONS FUNCTIONING IN SOUTH CAUCASUS OPENS IN YEREVAN [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

April 27 a two-day conference of Russian organizations functioning in the South Caucasus opened in Yerevan. Representatives of Russian organizations functioning in Armenia, Georgia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia took part in the event.

Assistant to the head of the Armenian President's staff Vigen Sargsyan presented Serzh Sargsyan's greeting speech in which the Armenian President expressed his confidence that the conference will once more contribute to the preservation and spread of the identity, language and culture of the Russian nation in the South Caucasus.

"All the ethnic minorities in Armenia are provided with all the opportunities to preserve their language, culture and the art. In all the schools and other educational establishments functioning in Armenia the Russian language is taught, different Russian TV channels are broadcasted, cultural houses and churches function. With its activity the Russian community of Armenia also contributes to the consolidation of relations between two our states", - S. Sargsyan's greeting speech says.

In the greeting speech of Russian deputy Foreign Minister Grigori Karasin which was delivered by assistant to the head of links with Russian Diaspora Sergey Nikolayev, the official expressed confidence that the exchange of thoughts in this conference will give another opportunity to present the issues and programs of the Russian Diaspora. "Last year's events in the South Caucasus proved that we must be combined", - G. Karasin noted.

First assistant to the coordinator of relations with CIS states of the Russian Council of Federations Vladimir Lityushkin said that by now the Russian government has done everything to support the Russian communities in abroad.

"In spite of the world economic crisis our government will continue its programs to fortify its relations with the Russian communities in the Diaspora and to preserve the Russian identity", - he noted. According to V. Lityushkin each year nearly 10 000 students from CIS states have an opportunity to study in the Russian Universities.

"The fact gives another opportunity especially to our compatriots to come to Russia, study and to preserve the national identity", - he said.

Head of the department of national minorities and religion of the Armenian government Vardan Astsatrian said that the Russian community conducts an extended activity in preservation of the national identity in Armenia. According to him, the Russian community also utmost contributes to the enhancement and development of brotherly relations between Armenia and Russia.

According to the representative of the Russian community in Georgia Irina Svarchuk the 2008 was a difficult year for the community because of the Georgia-Ossian and Georgia-Russian conflict. She informed that there are great difficulties in the issue of preservation of the national identity, language and the culture, the broadcasted Russian TV channels have been closed.

"In spite of these difficulties we hope that these issues will be settled in the nearest future and the former good-neighborly relations between Georgia and Russia will be restored which will contribute to the development of the Russian community, preservation of the language and culture", - I. Svarchuk noted.

28. 6 CHILDREN ADOPTED FROM ARMENIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSES DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

During the first quarter of this year 6 children have been adopted from the children's houses of the republic.

Head of the department of children's issues of the Armenian Labor and Social Affairs Ministry Lena Hayrapetian told Armenpress that 2 of the adopting families are from the USA, 1 – from France and 3 – from Armenia.

In the 8 Ministry-affiliated children's houses 878 parentless children are taken care of, 376 of which – in the specialized children's houses. In the 7 boarding-schools of children's care and protection 700 children from socially insecure families are taken care of.

The "Armenian Democratic Forum" and "Armenian Support Union" NGOs of the Ministry support the graduates from the children's care institutions in the professional orientation, education, training, providing of money for satisfaction of the main needs as well as in the issue of providing a medical support.



In the 2 Ministry-affiliated day centers of children's care nearly 200 children of the risk group and their families are provided with social services. According to L. Hayrapetian, besides making use of psychological and other services, the children have also been involved in painting, singing and other sections.

29. "CAUCASUS 2008" INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE KICKS OFF IN YEREVAN [ARMENPRESS, 04/28/09]

"Caucasus 2008" international two-day conference kicked off today in Yerevan. Within the frameworks of the event a number of issues on political, social and economic developments in the North and South Caucasus in 2008, policy of USA, Europe, Turkey and Russia relating to the Caucasus, ethno-political conflicts and unrecognized republics of the region as well as regional security of the South Caucasus will be discussed.

Director of the Caucasian Institute, political scientist Alexander Iskandarian said that the conference will sum up the 2008 events in Caucasus.

Every year studies are being made in the institute and refer is being made to the important events which took place in the region during the past year, in this case in 2008.

A. Iskandarian said that the conference is annual and as a result of its work a book is published which sums up the reports of the most important events taken place in the region. For 2008 the political scientist singled out Russian-Georgian war which changed a lot of things in the region as well as in Armenian-Turkish relations.

Specialists from Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey as well European states arrived to participate in the conference.

30. NUMBER OF CRIMES IN THE REPUBLIC INCREASE [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

Compared with same period of the last year during the first quarter of this year an unprecedented 57% of increase of number of crimes has been registered in the republic. During yesterday's press conference the head of the Armenian Police Alik Sargsian informed that the number of crimes during the mentioned period reached 2,897 instead of 1,844 of the last year.

A 35% decrease of heavy and grave crimes has been registered; mainly cases of causing damage to the health on purpose, robbery, theft, swindler, cheating and hooliganism have increased.

During the mentioned period 130 economic crimes have been discovered which is for 46 cases more than the indicator of the first quarter of the last year. 231 cases of illegal circulation of drugs have been discovered instead of the 57 of the same period in 2008. According to A. Sargsian drugs into Armenia are mainly imported from Iran, Georgia and Russia.

During the first quarter also 16 corruption cases have been registered.

"A number of necessary events have been undertaken by the Police as a result of which a corresponding fight was conducted to ensuring the public order in the republic and combat against crime. Crime is in itself a social phenomenon, it has objective and subjective causes and naturally the increase of number of crimes is natural", - A. Sargsian noted.

According to him an active fight is conducted against the bad practice of hiding the crimes from registration. All the crimes are exclusively registered and given process to.

"I have assessed the works of discovery of the crimes as satisfactory. The indicators of their discovery have increased in all the types of crimes", - A. Sargsian noted.

According to the head of the Police a tendency of decreasing is noted in the number of crimes conducted through usage of weapon. In spite of this during the first quarter 330 units of illegal weapon have been discovered instead of 140 units of the last year. Extended works are also conducted against the illegal circulation of weapon. According to A. Sargsian the Police must enhance the fight against the illegal weapon, circulation of drugs, in connection to which a one-month-fight has been announced with the A. Sargsian's decree.

31. AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "SEXUAL HEALTH" TO BE HELD IN YEREVAN [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

An international conference on "Sexual Health" will be held May 7-8 in the Yerevan State Medical University after M. Heratsi dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the Chair of Sexology of the medical university.



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Doctor, sexologist, responsible secretary of the conference Vrezh Sahramanian told Armenpress that such a conference is being organized for the first time not only in Armenia but also in the whole South Caucasus. The conference aims at improvement of the general health level and informing the public about the sexual health.

It will also give an opportunity to obtain a holistic and true information on this sphere as not only sexologists but also representatives of other spheres of the medicine – psychiatrists, endocrinologists, psychologists, neurologist, urologists and others will deliver reports.

V. Sahmarian noted that nearly 25 reports will be read, 5 of which will be presented by specialists of other states – Russia, Ukraine, Australia and Belarus. In parallel to the conference an exhibition of modern medicine and medical devices will be held.

32. YEREVAN ZOO GETS READY FOR THE OPENING OF THE SEASON [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

The Yerevan zoo gets ready for the opening of the season. This year it will too open on May 1.

Director of the zoo park Sahak Abovian told Armenpress that at present renovation is being conducted in the zoo to meet the visitors on a proper level. According to him, this year's works of main reconstruction of the park will probably kick off in the second half of the year.

There are 2 200 animals of 210 types in the Yerevan zoo. The number of visitors to the zoo exceeds 150 000 each year.

33. AN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CAMP TO BE ORGANIZED MAY-JUNE IN BELARUS [ARMENPRESS, 04/29/09]

An international youth camp will be organized from May 11-June 19 this year in the Belarus "Zubryonok" (small bull) national children's resort complex.

Press service of the CIS executive committee told Armenpress that the camp is being organized on the decision of the CIS Youth Affairs council. The event has been initiated by the Belarus Education Ministry and the CIS inter-state foundation of humanitarian cooperation.

The initiative aims at creation of favorable conditions for development of the international youth cooperation, informing the youth about the state youth policy implemented in the CIS member states, fortification of the good-neighborly relations as well as enhancement of the knowledge of the youth about the CIS states.

Representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan will take part in the initiative.

The camp will be organized in two turns. First one of them will be called "School of the leader" and will last from May 11-28. Activists from youth social organizations, state institutions which deal with the youth affairs and representatives of council of young scientists as well as winners of "Leader" contests will take part in it.

During the second turn the "Relationship without limits" international conference will be held in which heads of children's unions and organizations, members of school self-governmental bodies are invited.

According to the program of the international camp meetings with the authorities of the CIS executive committee, heads of national state institutions of works with the youth, well-known political figures and scientists are intended.

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