



# AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 27, 2010

## TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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### AGBU NEWS

1. AGBU sponsors the first pan-Armenian chess Olympiad [AGBU Armenian Representation, 08/25/10]

As part of the "One Nation, One Culture" festival the first pan-Armenian chess olympiad took place in Yerevan from August 15 to August 23. The joint initiative of the RA Diaspora Ministry and the Chess Academy of Armenia brought to Yerevan forty high-ranking Armenian chess players from Diaspora, Artsakh and Armenia. For most of them this was the first opportunity to visit their homeland. The first pan-Armenian chess olympiad was sponsored by Chairman of the Union of French in Armenia



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Raymond Yezeguelian, Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and “Armavia” company. The total prize fund of the tournament, 22,000 USD, was provided by the AGBU.

10 teams (7 from Diaspora, 2 from Armenia and 1 from Artsakh) participated in the tournament each consisting of four players. The participants from the Diaspora were divided into groups based on their regions: Russia – 2 teams, CIS – 1, Europe – 1, Near and Middle East – 1, North America – 1, South America – 1. The Yerevan team was headed by Tigran Petrossian.

The opening ceremony of the first pan-Armenian chess Olympiad took place at the Chess Academy of Armenia on August 14 with the participation of RA President Serj Sargsyan, RA Diaspora Minister Hranoush Hakobian, and First Vice-President of the RA Chess Federation and President of the Chess Academy of Armenia grand master Smbat Lputyan.

The tournament gave a new impetus to the development of Armenia-Diaspora relations and contributed greatly to the spreading of Armenian chess traditions among the Armenian youth. It also helped boost sport and youth ties between Armenia and different Armenian communities of the world and promote a love of chess among the youth. This was an unforgettable opportunity for the Armenians from 12 countries of the world to compete with each other in their homeland.

The results of the tournament were summed up and the names of the winners were announced during the closing ceremony of the olympiad at the Chess Academy of Armenia on August 23.

The winning teams were the Europe team (3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2000 USD), the Yerevan team (2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2400 USD), and the CIS team (1<sup>st</sup> prize, 3000 USD).

The winners on individual score basis were:

Grikor Sevak Mekhitarian (Brazil, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize),

Tigran Petrossian (Yerevan, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize), and

Poghos Nahapetyan (Russia, 1<sup>st</sup> prize) among men, and

Katerina Rohonian (USA) and Siranoush Andreasian (Etchmiadzin, sharing the 3<sup>rd</sup> prize),

Tatev Abrahamian (USA, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize), and

Diana Arutyunova (Ukraine, 1<sup>st</sup> prize) among women.

All winners received financial awards from the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

Several participants of the Pan-Armenian Olympiad received international norms: WFM Tatev Abrahamyan fulfilled the norm of Women's Grandmaster, Diana Arutyunova - Men's International Master, FM Poghos Nahapetian, Manuel Petrosyan and FM Hovik Hayrapetian - International Master.

RA Diaspora Ministry and Chess Academy of Armenia awarded the sponsors and the organizers with certificates, letters of gratitude and medals.

For four years now AGBU is cooperating with the Armenian Chess Federation sponsoring the annual republican interschool chess tournaments.

## POLITICS

### **2. Eduard Sharmazanov: The talks about the temporary opening of the Armenian-Turkish border on the occasion of conduction of NATO drillings in Armenia are nothing but a Turkish show [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

The talks about the temporary opening of the Armenian-Turkish border on the occasion of the conduction of NATO drillings in Armenia are nothing but a Turkish show, secretary of the Armenian Republican Party's parliamentary faction Eduard Sharmazanov told Armenpress, commenting on the recent statements of Turkey that it may temporary open the border with Armenia on the occasion of the September 11-17 NATO drillings to be held in Armenia.

“This is mainly being spoken by the high-ranked Turkish officials, Foreign Ministry representatives. In my opinion this is just a clearly organized show. I think during the recent visit of president of Turkey to Azerbaijan the presidents of the two counties have not come to agreement over certain issues and now with such statements Turkey just wants to tell Azerbaijan that - if you meet our suggestions I will not open the border,” the parliamentarian said.

He said among the issues over which the two countries have not reached agreement are the ones connected with gas and deployment of the Turkish military base in the borders of Azerbaijan. “By making such statements Turks want to pick concessions from Azerbaijan to reach their goal,” Sharmazanov said.

### **3. Turkish progressive newspapers defend rights of Hrant Dink [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**



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The European Court of Human Rights upheld the claim of the family of Hrant Dink, former editor-in-chief of 'Agos' daily, against the state of Turkey. The Turkish foreign ministry held a special session August 24 for the discussion of the Turkish state's further steps. Roper Hattechyan, editor-in-chief of 'Marmara' Armenian daily, told Armenpress that it was suggested during the session to come to an understanding with Hrant Dink's family and solve the issue in a friendly way.

He added that in case Dink's family did not accept the offer, Turkey would have to wait for the verdict of the court. 'People are now waiting for the further developments, and the progressive Turkish newspapers claim that Turkey's self-defending letter to the European Court was disreputable; it created an unfavorable impression,' Roper Hattechyan said. He says the Turkish authorities mentioned in the letter that Hrant Dink had not asked for protection.

'Some representatives of the Turkish print media are defending the rights of Hrant Dink and condemning Turkey for the helplessness it showed during the examination of the murder case: the real assassins have not been revealed yet,' he said. The European Court of Human Rights brought Turkey in a verdict of guilty of not ensuring Dink's security and prosecuting him three times for denigrating Turkishness under Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code.

#### **4. Mark C. Toner: The USA view signing of defense agreement between Armenia and Russia as a bilateral issue between the two states [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

At a briefing August 25 Mark C. Toner, Acting Deputy Department Spokesman, in response to the question of a journalist whether the United States have any take on a defense agreement that Russia and Armenia concluded which will allow Russian forces to remain on Armenian territory for 40 years – until 2044 said that the USA view it as a bilateral issue between Russia and Armenia. "Obviously, the United States enjoys a strong partnership with Armenia. We have every expectation that this will continue. And Russia is a member of – or part of the Minsk Group and so is playing a constructive role in that capacity," Toner said.

#### **5. Hrant Melik-Shahnazaryan, "Sooner or later the NKR will become an internationally recognized state" [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

The Armenian-Azerbaijani war has not finished yet. Today we can speak only of temporary ceasefire, which is mainly conditioned by the circumstance that in 1991-1994 the Armenian party managed to register considerable successes in the Artsakh battle and created a solid defense line, Director of "Thought" analytical center, political analyst Hrant Melik-Shahnazaryan told Armenpress, noting that the war is not finished also because there are no natural borders between the Armenians and the Azerbaijani.

According to him, the current territories of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic just ensure the formed status-quo and are factors of unique balance to the Azerbaijani military budget which is growing day by day.

Mr. Melik-Shahnazaryan said that there are many international institutions where some issues concerning our region are discussed. But, as a rule, all avoid delivering any statement connected with Artsakh, leaving that issue to the OSCE Minsk group.

As for the statements of the Azerbaijani party, the political analyst does not advise to treat them seriously. "Lately Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev stated that Yerevan, too, is a historical Azerbaijani town. We must display adequate attitude to that delirium of the Azerbaijani party," he noted.

Mr. Melik-Shahnazaryan expressed confidence that sooner or later the NKR will become an internationally recognized state, irrespective of the circumstance whether we will hand a part of the homeland to the rival, or will liberate a new territory. "Today we have a fine opportunity of erecting a glorious history," he said.

#### **6. Levon Shirinyan says European direction of Turkey's policy can be considered failed [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

Turkey is leading a policy on appropriating the results of the Genocide, committed against the Armenians 1915, according to Levon Shirinyan, political scientist. He said at today's meeting with journalists that the fact that Turkey has not apologized to the Armenian nation for the great crime yet is the bright evidence of the above-mentioned policy.



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Levon Shirinyan says Turkey has 3 traditional political directions – European, Islamic and South Caucasian. According to the political scientist, the European political direction can be considered failed, and the Islamic one is in embryo, so Turkey tends to activate the South Caucasian political direction.

'In this direction Turkey displays bitter hostility towards Armenia, however, there is no need to be afraid of this, as Turkey is not as powerful, as it shows,' Levon Shirinyan added.

The political scientist says the ensuring of! higher technical education in the Republic will be of great strategic importance to Armenia, as the army should be supplied by those higher educational establishments.

'The development of technology, which can supply the Armenian army, will make Armenia invulnerable in such a complicated geopolitical environment,' he added.

## **7. Hamid Baghai speaks on Armenian Genocide [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

Hamid Baghai, vice President of Iran and chief of Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, recognized the Armenian Genocide with the statement, he made August 25 during the 'Iran: Bridge of Victory' conference. Speaking on the losses, Iran suffered during the World War II, he mentioned that the issue should be followed legally. Armenpress reports, citing the IRNA Iranian news agency, that in response to a reporter's question on up-to-datedness of the surveying of the losses in WW2, Hamid Baghai said that such issues are currently being touched upon in the international community by various states.

He mentioned about the recent complaints of Japan, as well as other such examples. 'The authorities of the Ottoman Turkey committed genocide 1915 against Armenians; though the Ottoman Empire does not exist any more, the Armenians demand of Turkey to apologize officially and pay compensation,' he said.

## **8. Gagik Harutyunyan, "Azerbaijani foreign policy has failed" [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

The Azerbaijani foreign policy has failed, Director of "Noravank" foundation Gagik Harutyunyan said today at a meeting with journalists, adding that some part of the Azerbaijani society has the impression that Azerbaijan has become a small toy in the hand of big powers. Among the failed directions of the Azerbaijani foreign policy Mr. Harutyunyan pointed out that the country has unfriendly relations with Iran, freezing is noticed in relations with Russia, and even in relations with Turkey Azerbaijan does not get what it would like.

According to military expert Davit Jamalyan, Azerbaijan uses 2 main theses in its information field, first, Azerbaijan is a rich country and can take victory over Armenia by obtaining weapon, and second, can gain victory by the advantage of the population quantity.

"But after Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's state visit and signing of important contracts Azerbaijan can not think of easy victory any more," Mr. Jamalyan said, adding that now this country will try to follow the path of discrediting contracts.

"Both in the South Caucasus and in the whole world some consensus is noticed between Russia and USA," Mr. Harutyunyan said, commenting on the USA attitude toward the latest Armenian-Russian contracts.

## **BUSINESS**

## **9. 12% growth registered this year in the sphere of tourism in Armenia compared with 2009 [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

Twelve percent growth has been registered this year in the sphere of tourism in Armenia compared with the officially registered number of the visitors of 2009 – 600 thousand. Chairman of the Armenian National Competitiveness Foundation Bekor Papazyan told today at a news conference that the ingoing tourism is growing year by year, by 10 % annually; 9% growth was registered in 2009 compared with 2008. Deputy Chairman of the Armenian Hotels' Union Hakob Hakobyan disputed these numbers, noting that the annual data of the hotels are incomparably low and other indexes are indicated.

Chairman of the Incoming Tour Operators Robert Minasyan distinguished between the conceptions of tourist and visitor. He conditioned Mr. Hakobyan's disagreement by the circumstance that the visitors who are the prevailing majority of Armenia, often dwell in the houses of acquaintance-relatives, make use of home services. "In those cases the state registers no profit," Mr. Minasyan noted.



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All the speakers unanimously agreed that the profitable and well-arranged tourism is not very developed in Armenia; Armenian hotels are overloaded by 25-30 % annually.

For promoting tourism in Armenia, according to Mr. Papazyan, participation in relevant 4-5 big international exhibitions is intended in 2011, where the Armenian services will be presented. A consultation with the Armenian government on adding the budget of tourism promotion is intended as well.

## **10. Memorandum signed between RA Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Glendale's 'Mashtots' College [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

Martin Sargsyan, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Armenia, and Karpis Ter-Yeghiayan, rector of Glendale-based 'Mashtots' College, signed today a memorandum of cooperation at the RA Chamber of Commerce.

The memorandum is directed to increasing of exportation volumes of the Armenian products, improving the business environment, promoting rise in Armenia's economic index, presenting the Armenian industry to businessmen via mutual visits.

According to Martin Sargsyan, chairman of RA Chamber of Commerce and Industry, preliminary studies of the US market will be required for making clear the list of goods, importation of which will generate more profits and will cause interest among Diaspora-Armenians and Americans. He added that serious studies of price policy will be required for drafting necessary strategic projects.

'This is a patriotic mission! for me and I am ready to devote myself to the success of the deal with 110%,' Karpis Ter-Yeghiayan said. He added that the list of goods will be made clear in the near future.

The memorandum intends cooperation in the sphere of organizing and holding of conferences, business forums, business visits, expositions and commercial presentations in Armenia and Los Angeles, US. It also intends provision of a corresponding territory in Glendale for holding a permanent expo-fair of Armenian goods. Within the framework of the memorandum it is also intended to draft and implement joint projects, directed to promotion of exportation, exchange business information, provide free of charge economic-legal consultation services.

The memorandum has no time limit.

## **11. Armenia has enough potential to develop industry more [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

The fund of the industrial turnover of the first half of the running year made 370 million USD and the industrial index of the GDP made 27%. Head of the Public Council's financial-economic commission Vazgen Safaryan said today at a news conference that the export indices notably yield to import indices and this situation must be corrected.

"We must make Armenia reach the title of industrial country," Vazgen Safaryan said, offering a program of events.

According to him, Armenia has enough potential to develop industry more. It is necessary to keep the existing factories and workshops in the own hands and deal with the improvement of productivity. Safaryan noted that on behalf of the Union of Producers a program relating to it has been presented to the government to fix it in the industrial concept worked out in January.

"At this concept president by the Ministry of Economy it will be pointed out that industry is considered or must be considered a priority in Armenia," he added.

## **DIASPORA**

## **12. Complaint against Azerbaijan in European Court Could Have Grave Consequences [Noyan Tapan, 08/25/10] By Harut Sassounian Publisher, The California Courier**

In recent years, Armenian-Americans have filed several lawsuits in U.S. courts against insurance companies, banks, and the Republic of Turkey, seeking compensation for losses stemming from the Genocide of 1915.

For the first time, on September 15, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) will hold a hearing on a complaint filed by an Armenian family against the Republic of Azerbaijan for damages suffered during the Karabagh (Artsakh) conflict. Remarkably, the ECHR will consider on the same day a similar complaint brought by several Azeris against the Republic of Armenia (Chiragov and others vs. Armenia).



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Minas Sargsyan, a former resident of Gulistan in the Shahumyan region, north of Artsakh, filed a complaint on August 11, 2006, regarding the destruction of his house and eviction from his property. Sargsyan stated in his complaint that someone else, presumably an Azeri, is now living in his house. Although Sargsyan passed away a year ago, his widow and two children are continuing to pursue the case. Due to a backlog, the ECHR normally takes several years before it hears a case. The Sargsyan family is represented before the Court by attorneys Narine Gasparian and Knarik Ohanyan of Yerevan (members of the Legal Guide NGO), and well known human rights lawyer Prof. Philip Leach representing the European Human Rights Advocacy Center in London.

The Shahumyan region is situated on the northern border of the former Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast, as it was known in Soviet times. More than 80% of Shahumyan was inhabited by Armenians prior to the Artsakh conflict. In June 1992, when the Azerbaijani forces bombed Gulistan, Sargsyans' two-storey house was destroyed. As a result, the entire population of the village fled fearing for their lives, according to the "Statement of Facts," summarized by the ECHR.

Sargsyan's complaint is based on the following claims:

1. The destruction of his house and eviction from his property constituted "a violation of his right to peaceful enjoyment of his possessions."
2. Infringement on his right to a private and family life and to his home because of his forced displacement and Azerbaijan's continuing refusal to allow him access to his home and belongings.
3. In view of the demolition or vandalism of several Armenian cemeteries in Azerbaijan, Sargsyan stated that he was unaware of the condition of the cemetery of his close relatives and that he was deprived of the possibility of visiting their graves, which he had done regularly in the past. The mere fact of knowing that the graves of his relatives were under the risk of being destroyed caused Sargsyan severe suffering and distress. The inability to visit the cemetery deprived him of spiritual communication with his deceased relatives, as visiting and maintaining his relatives' graves was a religious duty that he fulfilled before his eviction.
4. There are no effective remedies available to ethnic Armenians who were forced to leave their homes in Azerbaijan. Armenians who had sought to lodge complaints with relevant Azerbaijani authorities were unable to obtain any redress for the violation of their rights. Due to the unresolved status of the Artsakh conflict, there were practical difficulties and obstacles for gaining direct access to any remedies available in Azerbaijan.
5. Sargsyan complained that he had been subjected to discrimination in Azerbaijan, based on his ethnic and religious affiliation. He submitted that only ethnic Armenians living in Azerbaijan had been targets of violence, pogroms, and attacks. The Government of Azerbaijan failed to investigate violence against Armenians and to provide redress for the illegal occupation of their properties and the destruction of Armenian cemeteries.

This is the first Armenian complaint lodged with the ECHR for violations of property rights, among others, by the Republic of Azerbaijan. If successful, it will set an important precedent for claims by hundreds of thousands of Armenians who were forced to abandon their properties in Baku and other parts of Azerbaijan. Similarly, the Chiragov complaint lodged against Armenia could open the door for demands by hundreds of thousands of Azeris who left their homes during the Artsakh conflict. In contrast to the Armenian case, however, most Azeris left at their own free will and sold their properties prior to their departure.

It cannot be a mere coincidence that the Armenian and Azeri complaints are set to be heard by the Grand Chamber of the ECHR on the same day. If the Court finds a violation of property rights in these two cases, and orders monetary compensation to the applicants, this would likely lead to many similar cases being filed in the future, which could have far-reaching consequences for the economies of Armenia and Azerbaijan, amounting to billions of dollars. Alternatively, the Court could mandate that both countries allow their respective citizens to return to their former homes, which could create new upheavals and security risks in the region. As members of the Council of Europe, Armenia and Azerbaijan are obligated to comply with the decision of the Court.

Both hearings could be followed live on September 15, on the Court's website:

[www.echr.coe.int/echr](http://www.echr.coe.int/echr). The Azeri complaint will be broadcast at 9:15 a.m., while the Armenian one is set for 2:30 p.m. (French time).

### **13. Saro Khudaverdi Appointed RA Diaspora Minister's Advisor to Milan [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

RA Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan received today Saro Khudaverdi and his spouse Siran Boranyan – active members of the Armenian community to Milan. An official from the press and PR office of RA Diaspora Ministry told Armenpress that the Diaspora Minister greeted the guests and presented the



activities and forthcoming projects of the Ministry. Hranush Hakobyan underscored the importance of the pan-Armenian professional conferences, organized by the Diaspora Ministry, which bring to formation of pan-Armenian professional unions.

During the meeting the sides discussed a variety of issues on the Armenian community to Milan. Saro Khudaverdi was appointed RA Diaspora Minister's Advisor in Milan on the decree of RA Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan.

#### **14. Issues on founding Armenian Philanthropists Avenue discussed at Diaspora Ministry [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

RA Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan received today Mkrtych Minasyan, chairman of RA Architects Union, Hrach Poghosyan and Sashur Kalashyan, members of the administration of RA Architects Union.

An official from the press and PR office of RA Diaspora Ministry told Armenpress that the Diaspora Minister greeted the guests and presented the activities and forthcoming projects of the Ministry. A number of issues on 'Founding Armenian Philanthropists Avenue' project were discussed at the meeting. The 'Founding Armenian Philanthropists Avenue' project is aimed at promoting the preservation of national, spiritual and cultural values, as well as educating the current and next generation with the examples of Armenian philanthropists. A monument, symbolizing the collective image of the Armenian philanthropists, is intended to be erected within the framework of the project. 6 other monuments, dedicated to famous Armenian philanthropists – Lazaryan brothers, Mikayel Aramyants, Poghos Nubar, Alexander Mantashyan, Galust Kyulpenkyan and Alek Manukyan – will be erected as well.

The project of erecting cross-stones on the Armenian Genocide of the Diaspora as museum exhibits in the territory of the Tsitsernakaberd memorial in 2015 on the 100th completion of the Armenian Genocide was discussed as well.

#### **15. Support of the British local body of "Hayastan" foundation to Armenian pupils [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

Within the frameworks of social programs implemented in provincial schools, Representative of the British local body of "Hayastan" all-Armenian foundation Anahit Ghazaryan visited August 24-26 Talin children's school of fine art, as well as the schools of Artsni and Dzoramut communities of Lori province, where 180 pupils were provided necessary school accessories of about 2, 5 million Drams.

An official from the foundation told Armenpress that thanks to the local body of the Great Britain on behalf of head Armine Karapet, over 1800 pupil beneficiaries from the provinces of Shirak, Lori, Tavush, Vayots Dzor and Aragatsotn have been involved in the last 10 years in this initiative of social support.

"The British local body implements support programs in provinces in parallel to big infrastructural ones. I hope suchlike initiatives facilitate the trouble of parents," Mrs. Ghazaryan said while handing presents.

Parents, teachers, directors, as well as heads of communities delivered a gratitude speech. The pupils expressed their gratitude by beautiful performances of song, reciting and handmade presents.

"Even the trifle attention is of great importance for the residents of remote villages," program coordinator Mariam Zenjirjyan said.

#### **16. Gathering of Diaspora-Armenian graduates in Yerevan [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

Armenian Diaspora Ministry has undertaken to conduct September 20-22 a gathering of Diaspora-Armenian graduates of higher educational establishments. Press service of the Armenian Diaspora Ministry told Armenpress that the goal of the gathering is to discuss the role of the Diaspora-Armenian graduates of Armenian higher educational establishments, to establish an all-Armenian association of Diaspora-Armenian graduates. Visits of the participants of the gathering to Armenian higher educational establishments are intended, where meetings, lectures and workshops will be organized.

The Armenian Diaspora Ministry invites all the Diaspora-Armenian graduates of Armenian universities to participate in the mentioned gathering, as well as looks forward to receiving proposals on organization of the gathering and on the issues to be discussed.



## ARTS

### **17. Famous artist Vladimir Msryan passes away [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

The Armenian theatrical art had a great loss – at the age of 72 Armenian people’s artist, laureate of state award, holder of Movses Khorenatsi Medal Vladimir Msryan passed away.

With the decision of the Armenian Prime minister a governmental committee has been set up to organize the funerals of the artist. The artist will be buried in Yerevan town pantheon.

Vladimir Msryan was born in 1938 in Vladikavkaz. In 1961 he graduated from the Yerevan Theatrical Institute. From 1967 till the end of his life Msryan worked in the H. Ghaplamyán Theatre of Drama.

Armenpress news agency extends its deepest condolences to the family, relatives and friends of the outstanding artist, the memory of which will always be alive in the hearts of many thousands of his fans.

### **18. 4th Yerevan international festival to be conducted from September 10 to October 22 [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

From September 10 to October 22, the Armenian State Philharmonic Orchestra will conduct the 4th Yerevan music festival under the high patronage of Armenian First Lady Rita Sargsyan and with the support of the Armenian Culture Ministry.

Director of the Armenian State Philharmonic Orchestra Ruzanna Sirunyan told Armenpress that famous soloists Fransua Frederic Gin, Ashley Vos, violinist Daishin Kashimoto and others will take part in the festival. “That is, there will be exclusive guests at the festival and we will do our best that as many chamber concerts are held as possible,” Ruzanna Sirunyan assured, adding that this year an attention will be paid to conduction of master classes by distinguished musicians for younger ones

The art directors of the festival are Eduard Topchyan and Alexander Chaushyan.

### **19. Armenia - winner of “New Wave-2010” international children’s song contest [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

“Razmik and Friends” group which represented Armenia at “New Wave-2010” children’s song contest has occupied the first honorable place sharing it with representative of Ukraine Victoria Petrick.

“Though we share the first place with the representative of Ukraine, we are happy as the latter is very talented,” Producer and head of the group Michael Margaryan said, citing the statement of soloist of the group Razmik Aghajanyan, according to which he wanted to share the first place with Victoria Petrick.

Razmik Aghajanyan said that he has returned with summer mood and with new hopes. “Though we were excited before the concert, we calmed down on the stage,” he added. The soloist of the group said that he wants to participate in the international children’s song contest of “Eurovision-2010”. “We have presented at the pre-qualifying round of the contest my author song of “Let it be”, which is a call addressed to the “president of the world” – “let it be sun and sky”, he said.

### **20. Exhibition entitled “Artists of Film, Theater and Television” opened [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

An exhibition entitled “Artists of Film, Theater and Television” opened today in the Armenian Artists’ Union and will last till September 13. Around 200 works of about 50 artists are exhibited.

“Completely new works are exhibited. Here are not only paintings, but also collages and dolls, through which we have wished to convey a festive nature to the exhibition and I think we have managed,” Director of the Film, Theater and Television Section of the Artists’ Union Stepan Andranikyan said, attaching importance to the circumstance that the majority of the artist who partook in the exhibition are active specialists in their field. The film, Theater and Television Section operates inside the Artists’ Union and has been formed from the 1930s. Seven suchlike exhibitions are today organized on the initiative of the latter.

Chairman of the Armenian Artists’ Union Karen Aghamyan, too, attached importance to the exhibition, noting that the latest exhibition entitled “Film, Theater and Television Artists” was organized 5 years ago.

“The role of artists is huge both in films, theater and television, but they always remain in the shadow. Each of the works presented here can be considered a unique art,” Karen Aghamyan said.



Three collages by Victor Hovhannisyanyan who worked in TV for many years were exhibited as well, the thematic of which is Armenia with its colors.

## **21. International book art festival entitled “Back to the Book” to be conducted October 1-7 in Yerevan [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

International book art festival entitled “Back to the Book” will be conducted October 1-7 in Yerevan. It is implemented by “Armenian Book Center” cultural union and Khnko Aper Children’s National Library under the high patronage of Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan and Armenian Culture Ministry. Director of the library Ruzanna Tonoyan told Armenpress that days rich in interesting events are expected. Many publishers, writers, art figures and artists from Armenia, Iran, Germany, and France will take part. There is an initial agreement of participation with the USA and Italy as well.

“The 500th anniversary of book publishing will be grandiosely celebrated in 2012 in Armenia, for the same year Yerevan has been proclaimed by the UNESCO a world capital of book. On the eve of those important events we intend to conduct an international book art festival,” Mrs. Tonoyan said.

The international festival will kick off in Khnko Aper Children’s National Library; afterward a parade to the Freedom Square will be organized, where the key event of the festival – big exhibition-fair of books, will be conducted.

Mrs. Tonoyan said that the program of the festival includes multi-content events and actions. The embassies of Iran, Germany, France, USA and Italy will have active participation. Series of reading of fairytales under the heading of “Fairytale Gates” is intended to organize with participation of the embassies accredited in Armenia.

Mrs. Tonoyan noted that several open-air events will be implemented. A concert of young rock groups of the republic, contest-exhibition of paintings, theatrical show, etc will be conducted.

“Thanks to suchlike events we want to attach importance to the role of book and reading, I think we will manage to organize a real holiday of book during those days in Yerevan, Mrs. Tonoyan said.

A number of workshop-discussions on book are intended to conduct as well.

## **22. New “Steinway” royal in Armenia [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

On the initiative of the Armenian Culture Ministry and with the financial support of the government, “Aram Khachatryan” concert hall already has a new royal of “Steinway” brand, produced in Hamburg. Director of the Armenian State Philharmonic Orchestra Ruzanna Sirunyan told Armenpress that the royal is already in Armenia, the document formulations are in process, and it will be in the Armenian State Philharmonic Orchestra already in several hours.

Mrs. Sirunyan said that Art Director and Chief Conductor of the Armenian State Philharmonic Orchestra Eduard Topchyan was present at the purchase of the royal. The Armenian government has allocated 62 million Drams from the reserve fund for buying it. The royal itself costs 99 thousand Euros, and the rest money is intended for state dues.

Mrs. Sirunyan said that the royal has been transported by aircraft. “After the transportation the piano must not be touched for 2 weeks, as it must get adapted to the climate. Besides that, a special representative will arrive from Moscow to open it,” Mrs. Sirunyan said, adding that it will be implemented September 8.

Mr. Topchyan noted that the further technical supply must be implemented by the professionals of “Steinway”. In case of good care the royal will be possible to use for 30-40 years,” he stated.

## **23. The 6th international film festival of children’s films to be conducted in Yerevan [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

The 6th international film festival of children’s films will be conducted in Yerevan October 12-16 by the “Rolan Bikov” Foundation of Development of Film and Television for Children and Juniors” with the assistance of the President of the RA and Ministry of Culture.

Spokesperson for the festival Bella Hovhannissyan told Armenpress that 158 film applications have already been received from 30 European, Eastern, South American countries. The deadline for submitting applications is September 1 after which a council will decide which films will participate in the event. It is expected to show 50-60 films. “As far as the festival is not an end in itself master classes, film premiers and meetings with spectator, children, juniors as well as Armenian art figures will take place,” Hovhannisyanyan said. According to her, a number of distinguished cultural figures from Russia, South Africa and other countries will also arrive.



Within the framework of the same festival last year 51 films from 23 countries were presented.

## RELIGION

### **24. Ruben Melkonyan: 'The Armenians should participate in the liturgy of Surb Khach Church in a restrained and coordinated way' [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

The Armenians should participate in the liturgy, which is expected to be chanted September 19 at Surb Khach (Holy Cross) Church on Akhtamar Island, in a restrained and coordinated way, according to Ruben Melkonyan, Turkologist. He said today in an interview with Armenpress that liturgy is just a religious event, but the Turkish authorities transformed into a political show.

'It is impossible to refuse to partake in the event, but I am against the fact, that over 5000 Armenians have already booked rooms in the hotels of Van a month before the event,' he said.

Ruben Melkonyan says the liturgy is connected with the Turkish propaganda machine. 'One can imagine the response of the Turkish mass media; they will start presenting Turkey as a tolerant country. However the attitude of the Turkish police officer towards the children of 'Hay Aspet' project, who were praying in the church, made clear the real moods of the Turkish society,' the Turkologist said.

As to partaking in the liturgy, Ruben Melkonyan said it is the business of an individual; however he added that the liturgy may be used for propaganda purposes.

'This step of the Turkish authorities contradicts to Turkey's current law, according to which the state does not have the right to intervene in religious issues,' Ruben Melkonyan noted.

### **25. Roper Hattechyan: 'The liturgy of Surb Khach Church is propaganda, but we have our interests in it' [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

The Armenians should partake in the liturgy of Surb Khach (Holy Cross) Church on Akhtamar Island, according to Roper Hattechyan, editor-in-chief of 'Marmara' Armenian daily. Roper Hattechyan said today in an interview with Armenpress that the Armenians, living in Turkey, are pleased with that the Turkish authorities allowed chanting the liturgy.

'Though this is some propaganda, but we have our interests in it,' Roper Hattechyan said. He mentioned that the Church, which belonged to the Armenians, will 'breathe again like a church' for one day. He says the other churches should be reconstructed as well. 'Nonetheless, this should be considered the first step by the Turkish authorities,' he added.

The Armenian community and the Patriarchate are currently undertaking corresponding measures for organizing of the liturgy. An Armenian chorus and song-dance ensemble will partake in the liturgy.

Roper Hattechyan informed that the Turkish press publishes articles about the participation of thousands of people. 'I am not sure whether the data are correct or not; however the Armenian community is inspired with this very much,' Roper Hattechyan said. He mentioned that Armenian songs and dances will be performed again September 19 in Van.

### **26. Karekin II receives newly appointed Representative of UNHCR in Armenia [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

His Holiness Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II received today newly appointed Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Armenia Damtew Dessalegne.

Catholicosate press office told Armenpress that welcoming the visit of Mr Dessalegne to the Holy See, Karekin II wished him success in his humanitarian mission. The Catholicos also said he welcomes the cooperation established between the UN office and the Holy See thanks to which a number of nature protection programs have been carried out.

The interlocutors also referred to the issues of refugees. The Catholicos thanked for the assistance of the UNHCR to the families of refugees.

The Catholicos presented to Mr Dessalegne the mission of the Armenian Church, history of the Mother See of Holy Etchimiadzin.

## SOCIAL



**27. Scientific center of Armenian researches to operate at Baku State University [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

The Scientific Center of Armenian Researches is expected to start operating at Baku State University in the near future, according to Parvana Ibrahimova, head of the press and information center of Baku State University. She told the Azerbaijani 'GayNar' website that the establishment of such a center is directed to studying the modern and up-to-date issues on the Armenian Cause, as well informing the Azerbaijani society about the social-political processes of Armenia.

Parvana Ibrahimova also mentioned that it is intended to transform the Scientific Center of Armenian Researches into a real scientific-strategic-sociological base for preparing specialists, who will operate in that sphere. 'Specialists of information warfare will work at the center. Specialists of Armenian will be invited as well. The center is expected to coordinate the articles, published in print media and websites of the Armenian TV and Radio channels, and make analytic reports and conduct researches. The center will have its website and will publish a scientific journal. The scientific articles and researches will be translated into other languages and will be placed on the website,' Parvana Ibrahimova said.

Gafar Chakmaglu was appointed the head of the Scientific Center of Armenian Researches.

**28. Over 100 Iranians applied for studying in Armenia [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

From this July the Armenian Education and Science Ministry has started reception of applications from those foreign students, who want to study in the upcoming academic year in the educational establishments of Armenia.

Head of Foreign Ties Department of the Armenian Diaspora Ministry Vahe Grigoryan told Armenpress that the education for foreign applicants will be organized in Armenia in all degrees, including the preparatory one.

Over 100 applications have been received up today, all – from Iran. The majority of the applicants prefer the Agrarian University.

The deadline of reception of applications is November 10.

As for Armenian applicants, this year the Armenian Education and Science Ministry has not yet received applications for studying at foreign educational establishments.

**29. School of NKR's Togh community being reconstructed [Armenpress, 08/25/10]**

The construction of the sports ground and reconstruction of the right subsidiary building of the school of Togh community of Artsakh's Hadrut District was involved in the Hayastan All Armenian Fund's 2010 program.

An official from the fund told Armenpress that the project is intended to be finished late November, 2010. The part, which is currently being reconstructed, is comprised of 4 subsidiary buildings. A cloak-room with shower-baths and a reserve part will be constructed near the sports ground in the main subsidiary building of the school. The hall of festivities will be reconstructed as well.

The right subsidiary building and the former canteen will be provided to the Art Center. The dormitory, intended for the teachers of the Art Center, will have a separate entrance. The school campus will be improved as well. The sheet-lead of the roof is intended to be changed, too. The total cost of the project is 318 million AMD.

Togh community has one urban and 40 rural community. The left subsidiary building of the school was reconstructed 2008 under the patronage of the Hayastan All Armenian Fund's local body of the American West.

**30. About 1400 schools to work in 2010-2011 academic year in Armenia [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

On September 1, about 1400 schools in Armenia will open their doors. An official from the Secondary Education Department of the Armenian Education and Science Ministry told Armenpress that 35 secondary schools which are under the liability of the Education and Science Ministry, as well as 57 non-state licensed secondary educational establishments will work. There are 25 state special secondary educational establishments in Armenia.

According to the official information published by the Armenian Education and Science Ministry, 91 senior schools will work in the upcoming academic year, the 37 of which - in Yerevan. Four senior schools will work in Ararat province, 6 in Armavir, 5 in Lori and Gegharkunik, 9 in Shirak, 4 in Syunik and Tavush, 3 in Vayots Dzor and Aragatsotn province, and 11 in Kotayk.



# AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 27, 2010

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## **31. Valuable items found during excavations of Lori Berd [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

The Historical-Cultural Heritage Scientific-Research Center subordinated to the Armenian Culture Ministry has registered noteworthy results after the wide-scale researches carried out in Lori Berd village. Director of the center Hakob Simonyan told Armenpress that the site dates back to the 10-17th centuries. As a result of the excavations, the walls of 24 m height and 20 m width have opened.

Large-scale researches have been carried out and many valuable items have been found.

"This is a unique item, a head of finally erected statue," the director said. Mr. Simonyan said that quite high-quality golden, glass subjects of splendor, cross-stones, as well as protocols of the 13th and 14th centuries have been found. "These researches present the medieval culture, the capital of Kyurikyans – a branch of Bahratuni wealth, has been situated here," the director said.

The site is 3 km from Stepanavan town and the historical name of the latter is Lore.

## **32. Some departments of Gyumri higher educational establishments can be closed because of the absence of students [Armenpress, 08/26/10]**

Some departments of Gyumri higher educational establishments can be closed because of the absence of students. This year Gyumri's M. Nalbandyan State Pedagogical Institute and some departments of the Gyumri branch of the Yerevan State Architectural University face the issue.

Responsible Secretary of the Receiving Commission of the pedagogical institute Arthur Khachatryan told Armenpress that there are also vacant places in the institute. Vacant places have been registered both in the system of state order and paid one.

There are many vacant places in the Gyumri branch of the Yerevan State Architectural University as well, where 145 vacant places have been registered for 235 plan places.

The image is quite different in the Gyumri branch of the Yerevan State Economic University; a contest has been registered here because of the large number of applicants, and instead of 82 plan places at first 56 additional, and then other 21 places were provided on the assignment of the Armenian Education and Science Ministry, as a result of which all the applicants who applied to the establishment by first bid, or overcame the passing thresholds, are considered to be students of the higher educational establishment.

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*Established in 1906, AGBU ([www.agbu.org](http://www.agbu.org)) is the world's largest non-profit Armenian organization. Headquartered in New York City with an annual budget of \$36 million, AGBU preserves and promotes the Armenian identity and heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs, annually touching the lives of some 400,000 Armenians on six continents.*