



ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT  
HOSTS ANTI-CORRUPTION  
COUNCIL SESSION PAGE 2



ARMENIANS IN JERUSALEM:  
THE POLITICS OF SURVIVAL IN  
THE HOLY LAND PAGE 5

# ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

October 7-13 2010

## THEMA



### SERZH SARGSYAN: LACK OF TRADE TURNOVER WITH SLOVENIA IS OMISSION OF ARMENIAN AUTHORITIES

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said that intensification of economic relations between Armenia and Slovenia will create prerequisites for the bilateral relations development also in other fields. "We discussed economic cooperation and international relations. The intensification of economic ties is an important chain, which will approximate our people and serve as an impetus for the relations development also in other fields," Mr. Sargsyan told a joint press conference with his Slovenian counterpart Danilo Turk on October 11 in Yerevan, summarizing the results of the Armenian-Slovenian business forum. The business forum brought together around 40 Slovenian companies from various fields, including, trade, tourism, construction, power industry, high and information technologies. The Armenian President noted that the lack of trade turnover between the two countries is an omission of the authorities. In 2009, the trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$9.5mln,

with almost zero export from Armenia. Slovenia exported pharmaceutical goods, ethyl alcohol, perfume, cosmetics, etc. Mr. Sargsyan said that Armenia welcomes Slovenian investments. He noted that four documents, which create a legislative basis for boosting the bilateral cooperation, were signed as part of the Slovenian President's official visit to Armenia. The Convention for Avoidance of Double Taxation and agreement on economic cooperation are among them. "We will work on expanding the legislative field," the Armenian President said. Referring to international cooperation, Mr. Sargsyan noted that it has changed qualitatively and become more arranged. Specifically, Armenia already negotiates on signing of the association agreement, as well as works are carried out on the project for joining the deep and comprehensive free trade agreement. Serzh Sargsyan said that Slovenia, which has passed this way, can share its experience with Armenia. *October 11, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

### "QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"WE IN ARMENIA WERE GUIDED BY A VISION OF A FUTURE IN WHICH GENERATIONS WOULD LIVE IN PEACE AND SAFETY. THIS ARMENIAN INITIATIVE MET A POSITIVE RESPONSE BY THE TURKISH PRESIDENT..."

EDWARD NALBANDYAN  
RA FOREIGN MINISTER

### Upcoming Events

**October 16:** Armenia Celebrates the Day of Alphabet and Translation

**October 16:** Official opening ceremony of Tatev Ropeway

**October 22-23:** PM Tigran Sargsyan leaves for Yekaterinburg

### USEFUL LINKS

- [www.president.am](http://www.president.am)
- [www.gov.am](http://www.gov.am)
- [www.parliament.am](http://www.parliament.am)
- [www.mfa.am](http://www.mfa.am)
- [www.armenpress.am](http://www.armenpress.am)
- [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)
- [www.matenadaran.am](http://www.matenadaran.am)

## ARMENIAN PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO IRAN SCHEDULED FOR END OF OCTOBER



On October 9, Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan met with a delegation led by the Irani-

an parliamentary speaker Ali Larijani. The parties discussed perspectives of economic cooperation development, emphasizing the importance of joint programs in transportation and energy sectors. The Prime Minister spoke of his visit to Iran scheduled for the end of October. A visit to Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines to brief Iranian businessmen on perspectives of economic development in Armenia is on the Prime Minister's agenda, governmental press service reported. *October 9 2010, [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

## ARTHUR GHUKASYAN: HIGH FEST 2010 WAS A SUCCESS

Armenian audience needs to be acquainted with experimental theater art, High Fest President said.

"This year's festival was a success," Arthur Ghukasyan told a press conference on October 8.

"It's gratifying that Armenian performances attracted greater audience than foreign ones," he said.

*October 8, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

## GRIGOR MKHITARYAN WINS CHAMPION'S TITLE AT WORLD YOUTH AND JUNIOR SAMBO CHAMPIONSHIPS' M FIGHTING IN MEXICO



On October 8, Armenia's Grigor Mkhitarian (weight class 48kg) won champion's title among juniors, while Mher Karapetyan (weight class 75kg) won bronze. Youth representatives will enter competition on October 9 and 10, Armenia's Sambo Federation told PanARMENIAN.Net

*October 9, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

## 240 ARMENIAN SCHOOLS TO BE PROVIDED WITH HI-TECH EQUIPMENT

On October 8, Zoravar Andranik ON5 School in Armenian region of Armavir hosted opening of a computer class. The equipment provision was sponsored by South Caucasus Railway, GeoProMining Company, GNC- ALFA network services operator in Armenia and Rossotrudnichestvo Armenia with the assistance of Russian Embassy in Armenia. The modernization of the computer class was implemented within the framework of a program aimed at provision of 240 Armenian schools with Hi-Tech equipment.

*October 8, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

## ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT HOSTS ANTI-CORRUPTION COUNCIL SESSION

On October 12, Armenian government hosted the anti-corruption council session led by the head of the council, Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan. Amendments to the regulations on Creation of Anti-corruption Council were presented, envisaging changes in the structure of the monitoring committee in charge of anti-corruption strategy. Monitoring results in the framework of 2009-2012 activity program in the framework of anti-corruption strategy were discussed. Meeting participants also focused on the report of the head of Armenian delegation to GRECO (Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption), governmental press service reported.

*October 12, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

## HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **OCTOBER 7:** Armenian President offers participants of Armenian-French decentralized cooperation forum to visit NKR
- **AH**
- **OCTOBER 7:** Lebanese Prime Minister shelves visit to Armenia
- **AH**
- **OCTOBER 8:** Hrant Dink was targeted by Turkish mob before his murder
- **AH**
- **OCTOBER 8:** Armenian parliament members demand involvement of Armenia's representatives in investigation of Manvel Saribekyan's murder in Baku
- **AH**
- **OCTOBER 10:** Title of Honored Science Worker awarded to Yerevan Medical University pro-rector
- **AH**
- **OCTOBER 11:** Emir Kusturica reminds Turkish director Semih Kaplanoglu about the Armenian Genocide
- **AH**
- **OCTOBER 12:** Serzh Sargsyan gives high assessment to Armenian Relief Society activities
- **AH**
- **OCTOBER 13:** Pan-Armenian information field can help neutralize false propaganda

## MINIMUM SALARY IN ARMENIA RAISED BY AMD 2500

The Armenian government approved amendments to the RA law on minimum salary. "The amendments envisage raise of salary by AMD 2500, to total AMD 32 500 instead of previous AMD 30 000," Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Arthur Gevorgyan said.

*October 7, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

## ARMENIA 3RD IN EURO 2012 GROUP B

Armenia secured a powerful 4-0 win over Andorra in their 2012 European Championship qualifier on October 12, scoring three goals in the first half and adding one more after the break. Gevorg Ghazaryan's fourth-minute lead was Armenia's 100th goal since the country gained independence. Henrik Mkhitarian made it 2-0 in the 16th minute, Yura Movsisyan then volleyed in Sargis Hovsepyan's cross from the right in the 33rd and was replaced in the 53rd minute, right after Marcos Pizzelli made it 4-0. Thus, Armenia climbed 3rd in Group B, gaining 7 points. Russians top the standings with 9 points, followed by Ireland (7 points).

*October 2, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)*

## ARMENIAN PRESIDENT PARTICIPATES IN CELEBRATORY EVENTS TIMED TO 2792ND ANNIVERSARY OF YEREVAN



Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan participated in celebratory events timed to 2792nd anniversary of Yerevan. A program of Yerevan Day celebration was opened with a theater performance in Erebuni Museum, presidential press service told PanARMENIAN.Net. Armenian President participated in celebratory events timed to 2792nd anniversary of Yerevan

October 10, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL DENIAL OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE IS OFFENSIVE

Chairman of the Armenian National Committee of America Kenneth V. Hachikian sent a letter to The Wall Street Journal on Matthew Bryza's nomination as ambassador to Azerbaijan. The letter was published by the newspaper, the ANCA reported. "You are off the mark in your editorials attacking Sen. Barbara Boxer and the Armenian-American community for opposing President Obama's flawed nomination of Matt Bryza as ambassador to Azerbaijan ("Barbara Boxer (D., Armenia)," Sept. 20, and "Undiplomatic Hold-Ups," Oct. 6). The stakes for U.S. interests, regional stability and international energy security are too high for this type of political finger-pointing. In the last three months, at least eight soldiers have died on the Azerbaijan-Karabakh border. The U.S. government, in a failed exercise in artificial even-handedness, has consistently refused to stand up to Baku's threats of war and attacks. Mr. Bryza is the poster child for this strategy of appeasement.

His refusal to call out Azerbaijan's aggression, his silence in the face of Azerbaijan's demolition of a 1,300-year-old Armenian cemetery, and his ardent defense of Stalin-imposed borders at the expense of democracy, have all contributed to the instability of this pivotal region. Add conflict of interest issues to the mix and he is clearly the wrong diplomat, at the wrong time, for this post. America needs a fresh start in the Caucasus, with a new ambassador who will stand strong against Azerbaijani aggression. Sen. Boxer and Sen. Robert Menendez have provided the president an opportunity to put U.S. policy back on the right track. Finally, your dismissal of the ANCA's support for the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide as a "tribal Caucasian obsession" is offensive. The International Association of Genocide Scholars has unanimously concluded that what happened to the Armenians at the hands of the Turks was a genocide," reads the letter.

October 11, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## KAMIL KOPUNEK: ARMENIAN TEAM DESERVED VICTORY



After Armenia's victory over the Slovakian football team in an UEFA Euro 2012 qualifier 3:1, goalkeeper of Slovakia Jan Mucha admitted that Armenian footballers were much stronger. According to Mucha, they showed the worst football in the match with Armenia, the Slovak Football Association said on its website. According to forward Vladimir Weiss, who scored the only goal of Slovakia, Armenian footballers were very fast. "It's a pity that my goal has not secured our victory," he said. Kamil Kopunek said they knew that the match will not be an easy one. He added that the Armenian team deserved the victory, showing a nice and fast football.

ted that Armenian footballers were much stronger. According to Mucha, they showed the worst football in the match with Armenia, the Slovak Football Association said on its website. According to forward Vladimir Weiss, who scored the only goal of Slovakia, Armenian footballers were very fast. "It's a pity that my goal has not secured our victory," he said. Kamil Kopunek said they knew that the match will not be an easy one. He added that the Armenian team deserved the victory, showing a nice and fast football.

October 9, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## NALBANDIAN: ANKARA NEEDS TO PROVE ITS GOOD INTENTIONS



The Wall Street Journal has published Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian's article titled

## "TURKEY HAS GONE BACK ON ITS WORD."

The article reads: "Last year on Oct. 10 in Zurich, after intensive negotiations, Armenia and Turkey reached agreement and the foreign ministers of the two countries signed the protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations, opening of the border and development of bilateral relations. The Armenian-Turkish relations were in a deadlock when President Serzh Sargsyan initiated the normalization process with Turkey. We in Armenia were guided by a vision of a future in which generations would live in peace and safety. This Armenian initiative met a positive response by the Turkish President and allowed us to make a confident investment in a durable rapprochement. Our position was reflected in the well-known approach of normalization of relations without any preconditions. It was the bottom-line principle for starting the negotiations with Turkey. With this common understanding restarted, conducted this process and came to the agreements. From the beginning of the process up until now this approach has been shared by the whole international community-starting from the Swiss mediators to the secretary-general of the U.N., the OSCE, the EU, the U.S., Russia, France and many other countries. Unfortunately Turkey has backtracked from the agreements. Not only has it refrained from ratifying the protocols, but Ankara has returned to the language of preconditions that it had used before the beginning of the process. It seems we speak in different languages. On the one hand, the Turkish leaders pretend that they always respect the principle of pacta sunt servanda (agreements must be kept), but on the other hand, they refrain from ratifying and implementing the agreements signed by themselves in Zurich.

October 12, 2010

full article [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## IRAN, ARMENIA URGE REGIONAL CONVERGENCE

Iran and Armenia stress the importance of increasing convergence among neighboring countries in order to establish peace in the region. "Political relations between Iran and Armenia are rooted in historical bonds. Experience of the past 30 years show that the two countries have good political and economic relations," Fars news agency quoted Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani as speaking in a meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian in Yerevan on Saturday. He added that the two countries should make use of their potential to expand economic relations and said Iran and Armenia would take an effective step in line with common interests through the implementation of their ongoing talks. Larijani called for building a railway between Iran and Armenia, saying the project would serve the interests of both sides. The Armenian premier, for his part, said his country insists on promoting economic cooperation with the Islamic Republic and added no obstacle can prevent the



two countries from bolstering cooperation. Sarkisian added that he would pay a two-day visit to Iran on October 25 to prepare ground for increasing the level of bilateral economic cooperation. Meanwhile, Larijani, in a meeting with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, said Iran and Armenia play a leading role in establishing peace in the region. He stressed the importance of undertaking strategic projects between the two countries and said enhanced cooperation in areas, including construction of railways, energy transfer lines and power plants would play an effective role in boosting mutual relations. The Iranian Majlis speaker arrived in the Armenian capital of Yerevan on Friday at the head of a delegation on a two-day visit and is scheduled to travel to the Kazakh capital, Astana, on Sunday. Speaking to reporters in the Iranian capital of Tehran before his departure, Larijani said the Islamic Republic is seeking to expand friendly ties with its neighbors and wants to work together with them to enhance security and establish peace in the region.

October 10, 2010 [www.presstv.ir](http://www.presstv.ir)

## GOVERNMENT TO BOOST SPENDING IN 2011



State budget 2011 which was recently unveiled by the Armenian government envisaged a 7% increase in expenditures.

The draft of the state budget plans a spending of 998.4 billion drams, up from up from 935.5 billion drams projected for this year, news agencies reported.

Speaking at a cabinet meeting held in the northern Armenian town of Ijevan, Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian said that the government will work hard next year adding, A lot will depend on how we will end 2010.

Prior the global financial crisis which gravely affected Armenian economy last year, the public spending of the country had grown at a faster pace.

A resulting fall in tax revenues forced the government to cut it in 2009.

Government expenditures rose by 7% in the first eight months of this year amid renewed economic growth.

The recovery from the crisis led to a 21% year-on-year surge in tax revenues.

In 2011, the government plans to boost its overall budgetary revenues by 14.6%, to 850 billion drams.

Finance Minister Tigran Davtian expect this year deficit-to-GDP ratio to stand at 4.8%.

It was reported that the budgetary targets was based on the assumption that the Armenian economy will grow by 4.6% in 2011.

Similar forecast was also made by the International Monetary Fund.

In related news, a slump in Armenia's agricultural output resulting from bad weather urged the International Monetary fund to revise downwards its most recent growth projection for Armenia, Armenia Liberty.org reported.

October 10, 2010 [www.neurope.eu](http://www.neurope.eu)

## FLYDUBAI LAUNCHES NEW ROUTES TO IRAQ, ARMENIA

The emirate's first low cost airline, flydubai, has announced new routes to Sulaimaniyah in Iraq and Yerevan in Armenia starting next month, taking its network to 26 destinations, according to Gulf News. flydubai chief executive Ghaith Al Ghaith said, "Our two new destinations are both to incredibly important markets for flydubai. Sulaimaniyah is our second route in Iraqi Kurdistan, following on from the start of flights to Erbil in August." "The service to the Armenian capital Yerevan is a totally new market for us, but similarly, a very important one. As a city Yerevan has a long history, being inhabited from the 8th century BC, meaning there is thousands of years of history to be explored and discovered, while the modern city has much to offer too," he added. "The service to Sulaimaniyah underlines flydubai's commitment and con-



fidence in the country of Iraq, which has attracted a lot of investment from the UAE, helping grow trade links and cement ties between the two nations." Sulaimaniyah is a major city in the northern Kurdistan region of Iraq. A much younger city than some of its neighbours, with history stretching back to the 18th century, Sulaimaniyah has grown to be a large city, with a population of 800,000. Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, is an ancient city that is considered one of the world's oldest inhabited cities. Situated in the Ararat Valley, the city is picturesque with Mount Ararat providing a stunning backdrop. The city is divided by the Hrazdan River, with the river gorge offering a spectacular feature to the capital.

October 11, 2010, [www.finchannel.com](http://www.finchannel.com)

## KARABAKH TO REOPEN AIRPORT



The authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh are pressing ahead with plans to reopen the territory's sole civilian airport that was shut down nearly two decades ago.

Flights to and from the airport, located 8 kilometers east of Stepanakert, had been discontinued in 1991 amid intensifying armed clashes in and around Karabakh that degenerated into a full-scale Armenian-Azerbaijani war. Transport communication between the territory and the outside world has since been carried out only by land, via Armenia. The Karabakh government decided last year to reopen the airport, severely damaged during the 1991-1992 war, and raised about 1 billion drams (\$2.8 million) for its reconstruction from unspecified "charitable sources." It began building a new airport terminal and repairing the runway shortly afterwards. Government officials said earlier this year that a flight service between Stepanakert and Yerevan could be launched already in mid-October. However, Bako Sahakian, the president of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), made clear that this will not happen before the end of this year as he inspected the under-construction facility on Tuesday.

According to NKR Urban Development Minister Karen Shahramanian, work on the terminal building will be completed in November. He told RFE/RL's Armenian service that air navigation equipment is now being installed at the airport.

It is expected that Karabakh will have a regular flight service only with Armenia, at least in the near future. It is not yet clear whether the Stepanakert-Yerevan flights will be carried out by Armenia's national airline Armavia. Officials have said only that a one-way air ticket to the Armenian capital will cost 16,000 drams (\$45).

By comparison, the current fare for a minibus trip from Stepanakert to Yerevan, which takes between six and seven hours, is 5,000 drams per person. A random street poll of Stepanakert residents conducted by RFE/RL suggested that many locals will be willing to pay a higher price for much shorter and more convenient travel. "We won't be tired of long trips," said one man. "It should be interesting," noted another.

October 9, 2010 Lousabats N 855

## DOLMA...AND SOME MUSIC: THE TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTRY'S NEWFOUND PASTIME

Ever since the Turkish government failed to secure the ratification of the Turkey-Armenia protocols and essentially froze the so-called "normalization process," it has been desperately looking for alternative ways to give the semblance of progress where there is none. The protocols aimed at creating a schism between Armenia and the "bad Armenians" of the Armenian Diaspora, thus stalling the process of genocide recognition worldwide. But after Ankara tried to impose further preconditions, even official Yerevan—which seemed very keen to ratify the protocols—was defiant and stated that the Armenian Parliament was ready to vote on the protocols, but only when its Turkish counterpart did so. With the ball in its court, official Ankara failed to deliver and the process

was halted. With little (if any) prospect of securing the ratification of the protocols in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) before the general and presidential elections in the next two years, Ankara is now, more vigorously than before, looking for PR victories elsewhere. The Akhtamar Mass in September was supposed to serve such a purpose, but again, domestic politics interfered and, with the heads of Armenian churches and major organizations boycotting the Mass, little was accomplished. Now, across the Atlantic, here in New York, the Turkish Consulate General is holding a concert at Carnegie Hall on Oct. 7 to celebrate what is being touted as the "re-opening" of the Holy Cross Church in Akhtamar.

October 07, 2010 [www.armenianweekly.com](http://www.armenianweekly.com)

## ARMENIANS IN JERUSALEM: THE POLITICS OF SURVIVAL IN THE HOLY LAND



The Armenians of Jerusalem form one of the oldest Armenian communities outside of Armenia. The Armenian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem may be one of the most Armenian places in the world, too.

But this community is more than just old and Armenian. The community also controls, through the Armenian Church, at least a part of every major Christian Holy Site in the region, including the birthplace and crucifixion of Jesus, and the Tomb of the Virgin Mary.

With such a rich cultural legacy, one might guess that the Armenians of Jerusalem are strong and thriving. They are not. If the Old City were divided up today, the Armenians might barely command one street. They certainly would not lay claim to an entire Quarter, as they have for centuries. The survival of the community is today in peril. The population is dwindling. Armenian property rights are under attack. Even Armenian pilgrims are fewer in number. Matthew Karanian—a Pasadena lawyer and the author of several books about Armenia—traveled to Jerusalem earlier this year as part of a research and photography project. Karanian is the co-author, with Robert Kurkjian, of the best-selling travel guide *Armenia and Karabagh: The Stone Garden Guide*. This article is one in a series about the Jerusalem Armenians that Karanian has written and photographed for *Asbarez*.

## POLITICS OF SURVIVAL IN JERUSALEM

Armenians have 17 centuries of history in the Holy Land, and they share or own most of the major Christian sites, including the sites where Jesus was born, crucified, and buried. There's also a distinct geographical area in the historic walled city of Jerusalem known as the Armenian Quarter. This should be enough to make any Armenian feel proud. But after I had spent several days living among the Armenians of this sacred Armenian place, those 17 centuries of history instead felt like they were crushing down on me.

October 13, 2010 full story [www.asbarez.com](http://www.asbarez.com)