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# ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

December 7-13 2010

## THEMA



**PRESIDENT SARGSYAN  
PARTICIPATED IN THE WORKS OF THE INTERSTATE  
COUNCIL OF THE EVRASES AND COLLECTIVE  
SECURITY COUNCIL OF CSTO IN MOSCOW**

President Serzh Sargsyan, who is in Moscow on a working visit, participated at the 29th session of the Interstate Council of the EvrAsEs. The session was attended by the Presidents of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as by the leaders of the EvrAsEs observer-states. Armenia attained observer status at the Organization in 2003. In the framework of his working visit to the Russian Federation, on December 10 President Serzh Sargsyan will participate at the sitting of the Collective Security Council of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and at the meeting of the Council of the Heads of the CIS member states. In the framework of his working visit to Moscow President Serzh Sargsyan participated on December 10 in the works of the Collective Security Council of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Discussed were over 30 agenda items pertinent to the enhanced efficiency

of the emergency response system, status of the forces and means of the collective security structure, military and technical cooperation, information security and a number of other issues regulating CSTO activities in different areas. In accordance with the previously reached agreement, the CSTO presidency, currently held by the Russian Federation, will be taken over by the Republic of Belarus. At the session of the Collective Security Council the parties signed a declaration on the CSTO peace-keeping forces and adopted a statement of the CSTO member states. Documents adopted during the session will allow the CSTO member states to respond more efficiently and timely to the emergency situations. Amendments to the documents were introduced according to the agreements reached by the parties during the August 20 unofficial summit of the Heads of the CSTO member states in Yerevan which took place in the wake of the tragic events in Kyrgyzstan in June 2010. At the session of the CSTO Collective Security Council, the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan made a statement.

December 9-10, 2010  
[www.president.am](http://www.president.am)

### “QUOTE OF THE WEEK”

“IT’S GETTING HARDER AND HARDER FOR THE PRESENT-DAY WORLD TO GET ADJUSTED TO THE EMPIRES BUILT ON VIOLENCE AND IMPRISONMENT. IT’S DEFINITELY TIME FOR FREEDOM. FOR OUR PEOPLE, THE WORD FREEDOM IS NOT SIMPLY A NOUN “

TIGRAN SARGSYAN  
PM OF ARMENIA

### Upcoming Events

**DECEMBER 14:** The OSCE mission will conduct regular monitoring of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border near Berdavan village of Tavush region, Armenia

**DECEMBER 14-15:** International conference “The crime of Genocide Prevention, condemnation and elimination of consequences

### 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)

## THE MAIN STAGE OF “COMPUTER FOR ALL” PROGRAM IS OFF

Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan attended today a gala event ushering in the launch of the main stage of the Computer for All program, which seeks to boost the use of computers and the Internet and, thereby, help develop information technologies in Armenia. First, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan was introduced to the capacities of those computers available under the program. Then, the head of the program’s philosophy and practicalities through to the general public. I am glad to see that educational institutions are joining us leading the way to the development of undergraduate education in our country. Computers are going to substitute the textbooks at school improving thereby the teaching methodology and efficiency.” Concerning the accessibility of information technologies, the Prime Minister noted in part, “As a matter of fact, the modern world cannot be perceived without the use of computers. You may understand that this process should be started from the very school. We need to tackle the problem at its root over the next 2- 3 years, if we are to build a modern-type society within some 10-15 years. Additional AMD 700mn was earmarked this year to the Ministry of Education and Science so that it could procure computers for the schools in an effort to improve the schoolchildren-computers ratio in the system of general education.”



of government attended an open class held at Mekhitar Sebstatsi educational complex. Highlighting the program from the standpoint of his government’s drive for nationwide computerization, Tigran Sargsyan stated as follows, “The Computer for All program urges all the government agencies in Armenia to rally for the sake of an awareness raising campaign in order to get the program’s philosophy and practicalities through to the general public. I am glad to see that educational institutions are joining us leading the way to the development of undergraduate education in our country. Computers are going to substitute the textbooks at school improving thereby the teaching methodology and efficiency.” Concerning the accessibility of information technologies, the Prime Minister noted in part, “As a matter of fact, the modern world cannot be perceived without the use of computers. You may understand that this process should be started from the very school. We need to tackle the problem at its root over the next 2- 3 years, if we are to build a modern-type society within some 10-15 years. Additional AMD 700mn was earmarked this year to the Ministry of Education and Science so that it could procure computers for the schools in an effort to improve the schoolchildren-computers ratio in the system of general education.”

*December 8, 2010, full story [www.gov.am](http://www.gov.am)*

## THE 11TH SESSION OF THE ARMENIA-EUROPEAN UNION COOPERATION COUNCIL TOOK PLACE

On December 7, the 11th Session of the Armenia-European Union Cooperation Council took place in Brussels. The Armenian delegation led by the Foreign Affairs Minister arrived in Brussels to attend the session. The Deputy Foreign Minister Karine Ghazinyan, the Deputy Minister of Justice Nikolay Arustamyan, the Deputy Minister of Economy Mushegh Tumasyan and the Head of the Armenian Mission to the EU Avet Adonc were in the delegation. Zsolt Nemeth, the Minister of State for Foreign



Affairs of Hungary presiding over the EU in 2011 and Stefan Fule, the European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy led the delegation of the high-ranking officials from the various EU institutions. In the course of Council’s session, the agenda of the cooperation between Armenia and the EU, the steps undertaken

towards the development of relations, as well as the regional issues were discussed. Presenting the steps undertaken by Armenia towards the European rapprochement, Minister Nalbandian stated that the cooperation between Armenia and the EU is the priority of the Armenian foreign policy and the Armenian side will continue its purposeful policy aimed at the further development of relations. The Armenian Foreign Minister stressed the importance of the activity of the EU Advisers Group that supports reforms in Armenia. Edward Nalbandian described it as a successful example of effective cooperation. In the course of Council’s session, the participants had a detailed talk and expressed mutual satisfaction with the successful negotiations held in the frameworks of the Eastern Partnership Program. At the same time, they mentioned that the EPP has a considerable potential for the enlargement. The sides also exchanged views on the intensification of political dialogue, negotiation held on July of this year over the signing of the Armenia-EU Association agreement, the Deep and comprehensive agreement on the creation of free trade zone and facilitation of entrance visa regime.

*December 7, 2010 [www.mfa.am](http://www.mfa.am)*

## HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **DECEMBER 7:** Armenia commemorates 1988 earthquake victims **AH**
- **DECEMBER 7:** Georgy Petrosyan: official representation of Republic of Artsakh needs to be opened in Brussels **AH**
- **DECEMBER 8:** Armen Azaryan: traditional media should not beware of closer integration with social networks **AH**
- **DECEMBER 9:** Artsakh President meets with Armenia’s Union of Writers member and Diaspora writers **AH**
- **DECEMBER 9:** Khachkar in commemoration of Spitak earthquake victims set in Russia’s Slavyansk-on-Kuban **AH**
- **DECEMBER 10:** Armenia, Korea to develop bilateral ties **AH**
- **DECEMBER 11:** National Geographic Channel to broadcast film about Holy Spear kept in Armenia **AH**
- **DECEMBER 13:** Darchinyan to protest split decision loss to Mares **AH**

## ARTSAKH MARKS ANNIVERSARY OF REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE AND ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Superpowers are after all compelled to reckon with unrecognized states December 10 marks the 19th anniversary of the national Referendum in Artsakh and the day of adoption of the Constitution. Still before the first Referendum on Independence which was held on December 10, 1991, Declaration on Independence of NKR was adopted September 2 the same year. Nearly all eligible Artsakh voters (more than 99%) expressed their unified will and voted for an independent state. “I am convicted that one day superpowers will after all be compelled to reckon with those unrecognized states whose authorities are true to democratic values and people enjoy their legal rights,” Arthur Tovmasyan, Deputy Chairman of NKR NA said. “Adopting the first NKR Constitution on December 10, 2006, our state took an important step towards creating independence and a consolidated state,” he added.

*December 10, 2010 [www.hhpress.am](http://www.hhpress.am)*

## ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT TO ENCOURAGE NATALITY



The Armenian government is resolved to encourage natality in the country. “The matter concerns the allowances to be paid to pregnant women.

A relevant order has been already given to the Healthcare Minister,” Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan said. He said the draft project has been already developed and called on all interested parties to take part in the oncoming discussions. “If necessary, we will issue new legislative initiatives and amend the law to create favorable conditions to raise the birth rate,” PM Sargsyan said.

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

## ARMENIA'S 2011 STATE BUDGET TO EXCEED AMD 1 TRILLION

Armenian parliament launched debates on the bill on 2011 state budget. Presenting the final draft budget, Armenian Minister of Finance Tigran Davtyan said that 616 suggestions were received from deputies and parliamentary groups, out of which 215 suggestions have been approved by the government. “AMD 2.4bln growth is recorded in budgetary expenses and revenues. The defense expenses increased by AMD 5-6bln, what was suggested by the Armenian President and Republican Party of Armenia,” the Minister of Finance said. Thus, Armenia’s 2011 state budget will make AMD 1.1 trillion, with bud-



et revenues to make AMD 852bln. According to Tigran Davtyan, the budget deficit will remain also in 2011, amounting to AMD 148bln.

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

## VAHRAM NERSESYANTS: ALL-ARMENAIN BANK WILL STIMULATE EXPORT

Newly appointed Executive Director of All-Armenian Bank Vahram Nersesyants said that the bank has been established to stimulate export of goods produced in Armenia, securing their high competitiveness in international markets. The bank will not enter the field of commercial banks activity, but will allocate loans and make investments in long-term projects aimed at Armenia’s development, Nersesyants told a briefing on December 9. Vahram Nersesyants noted that the

bank’s authorized capital will total \$100mln, of which \$20mln will be allocated by the government, while the rest sum will be attracted from international structures and private sector. He added that the bank activity should be correct and transparent to prevent interference of political and other forces, what will allow the Bank to achieve success. Information technologies, healthcare, education and tourism will be priority directions of the bank activity.

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

## VIGEN SARGSYAN: BAKU KNOWS THAT KARABAKH IS ENTITLED FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

Azerbaijani authorities have always admitted that Nagorno Karabakh is entitled for self-determination, deputy head of the Armenian presidential administration said. “However, they erroneously insist that the people of Karabakh can constitute themselves within Azerbaijan,” Vigen Sargsyan said when

addressing a forum on “Legal aspects of Artsakh’s self-determination in the context of modern international law. Before and after Kosovo”.

He also stressed the importance of thorough study of the origin and development of the Karabakh conflict.

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

## FORMATION OF LOGISTIC CENTERS TO STIMULATE CUSTOMS ACTIVITY

Chairman of the Armenian State Revenue Committee Gagik Khachatryan said that the institution of customs brokers allows reducing contacts between enterprises and customs employees, as well as promotes simplification of customs processes. It constitutes an important anti-corruption lever, Khachatryan told a conference organized by the Association of Customs Brokers and OSCE Office in Yerevan. He noted that the Association has been established through joints efforts of the Committee and OSCE, while its positions will strengthen in future, as institutions of brokerage activity, training and revenues declaration are far from being perfect, what is proved by numerous shortages in closure of deals. Besides, Khachatryan noted that logistic centers should be created in future, which will both close deals and perform all activities related to the customs institution, including to warehouses.

December 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## ARMENIA, ARTSAKH TO COOPERATE IN ENERGY SPHERE



On December 11, President of the Artsakh Republic Bako Sahakyan received the minister of energy and natural resources of the Republic of Armenia Armen Movsisyan and director general of Hayrusgazard CJSC Karen Karapetyan.

Issues related to cooperation between the two Armenian states in the sphere of energy as well as implementation of joint programs were discussed during the meeting.

The parties emphasized the importance of bilateral cooperation in energy sphere for socioeconomic development of Artsakh.

Artsakh Republic premier Ara Harutyunyan and other officials partook at the meeting, Central Information Department at the Office of Artsakh Republic President reported.

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

## ARMENIA WARNS ON KARABAKH

Armenia's president threatened on Friday to recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as independent if Azerbaijan resorts to force to resolve their dispute over the rebel enclave. "Armenia is absolutely against a military solution to the [Nagorno-Karabakh] problem," President Serzh Sargsyan said in Moscow. "In the event Azerbaijan unleashes a new military venture, Armenia will be left with no choice but to recognize de jure the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh and provide for the safety of its population by all means." He spoke after a Kremlin meeting of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, a Russian-led security bloc of ex-Soviet republics. The past two years have seen the worst skirmishes along the boundaries around Nagorno-Karabakh, which broke away with the support of Armenia as the Soviet Union collapsed, since a 1994 ceasefire ended all-out war between Muslim Az-

erbaijan and Christian ethnic Armenians. No country has recognized the enclave as independent but it runs its own affairs with heavy economic and military support from Armenia. An Azeri military assault or Armenian recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh would seriously undermine Western and Russian mediation to find a negotiated, compromise settlement. Renewed fighting would also threaten Azeri oil supplies to the West, carried by pipelines skirting Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan, host to oil majors including BP, Exxonmobil and Chevron and with its military coffers swollen by petrodollars, says it is losing patience with negotiations and is prepared to use force. Mediators from Russia, the United States and France have led negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan since 1994 under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. They have made little headway.

December 13, 2010 [www.themoscowtimes.com](http://www.themoscowtimes.com)

## APPEALS COURT REVERSES ITSELF OVER ARMENIAN SUIT

A federal appeals court on Friday reversed itself and now says the heirs of Armenians killed in the Turkish Ottoman Empire can seek payment from companies that sold their relatives life insurance. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco said a California law labeling the killings as a "genocide" does not conflict with U.S. foreign policy, which the court said is unsettled on the issue. The ruling was 2-1, the same vote the same judicial panel came to last year when it struck down the California law empowering the heirs to sue companies that sold life insurance policies to Armenians killed in Ottoman-era Turkey during World War I. Last year, the same panel concluded that the U.S. government has sided with the Turkish government and formally taken the position against labeling the killings as a genocide. Therefore, that panel concluded, California's calling the event a genocide conflicted with U.S. foreign policy, making the state law invalid. But in a rare and stunning move on Friday, Judge Dorothy Nelson changed her mind and sided with Judge Harry Pregerson, which turned his 2009 dissenting view into law. "We conclude that there is no express federal policy forbidding states to use the term 'Armenian Genocide,'" Pregerson wrote. The ruling revived a lawsuit filed by heirs against three German insurers, including Munich Re AG. A federal appeals court on

Friday reversed itself and now says the heirs of Armenians killed in the Turkish Ottoman Empire can seek payment from companies that sold their relatives life insurance. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco said a California law labeling the killings as a "genocide" does not conflict with U.S. foreign policy, which the court said is unsettled on the issue. The ruling was 2-1, the same vote the same judicial panel came to last year when it struck down the California law empowering the heirs to sue companies that sold life insurance policies to Armenians killed in Ottoman-era Turkey during World War I. Last year, the same panel concluded that the U.S. government has sided with the Turkish government and formally taken the position against labeling the killings as a genocide. Therefore, that panel concluded, California's calling the event a genocide conflicted with U.S. foreign policy, making the state law invalid. turned his 2009 dissenting view into law. "This was totally unexpected," said attorney Brian Kabateck, who represents the Armenian heirs. "It's a great victory for the Armenia people." Kabateck and other lawyers have filed similar lawsuits against New York Life Insurance Co. and French insurer AXA, which were settled in 2005 for a combined \$37.5 million.

December 10, 2010

full story [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

## KIM KARDASHIAN URGES SUPPORT FOR ARMENIAN GENOCIDE RESOLUTION



Kim Kardashian is best known for her successful reality television franchise. The 30-year-old socialite has risen to fame with "Keeping Up with the Kardashians," but she also likes to show her serious side when it comes to important social and political issues. As a proud Armenian woman, Kim tries to incorporate her heritage into a number of her projects. From fashion to jewelry, the Armenian culture has found a place in Kim's work. She has also highlighted the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in years past with posts on her blog. On Thursday, Kim once again brought attention to a very important issue in the Armenian culture. With the use of her very popular Twitter page, Kim urged her followers to get involved with supporting the Armenian Genocide Resolution. She tweeted: "Everyone: Please call Speaker Pelosi TODAY at 202-225-0100 and URGE her to schedule a vote on H.Res.252, the Armenian Genocide Resolution." Aram Hamparian, Executive Director of the Armenian National Committee of America, brought attention to Kim's efforts saying, "We applaud Kim Kardashian, Serj Tankian and anti-genocide activists from across the country for calling on Speaker Pelosi to schedule a vote on the Armenian Genocide Resolution. Americans of good conscience want to see an end to the cycle of genocide and to do that, we have to start by calling evil by its name."

December 10, 2010

[www.examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com)

## EU BACKS UNCONDITIONAL TURKISH-ARMENIAN NORMALIZATION

The European Union reaffirmed its support for an unconditional normalization of Armenia's relations with Turkey following annual consultations held by top EU and Armenian officials in Brussels on Tuesday. The EU-Armenia Cooperation Council discussed a wide range of issues of mutual interest, including actions stemming Armenia's participation in the EU's Eastern Partnership program. The unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Turkish-Armenian relations were also on the agenda. The EU was represented at the meeting by its Enlargement Commission Stefan Fuele and Hungary's Foreign Minister Zsolt Nemeth. The Armenian delegation was

led by Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian. "The Cooperation Council took note of the state of play of the process to normalize relations between Armenia and Turkey," the EU said in a statement issued the next day. "The EU underlined the importance of ratification and implementation of the bilateral protocols without preconditions and expressed support for continued efforts in this regard." In a separate statement issued on Wednesday, the Armenian Foreign Ministry likewise stressed that the bloc wants to see the Turkish-Armenian protocols, signed in October 2009, ratified "without preconditions."

*December 11, 2010 Lousapats N 864*

## TOWARD A UNIFIED DIASPORAN LEADERSHIP

People who preach to the Armenian people the sermon of "forgive and forget" must realize that by perpetrating the Genocide, the Turks not only took over our 3,000-year-old homeland, murdered 1.5 million of its living population and more than 20 million of potential future population, but that they have pulverized the collective will of the survivors for perpetuity. Almost one full century after the Genocide, Armenians cannot get their acts together and consolidate some seven million of them scattered around the world into a cohesive collective force.

Seven centuries of oppressive foreign domination have worked into the moral fiber of the Armenian people and have made inroads into their genes, so much so that they have become accustomed to bowing to the rule of any foreign potentate, to serve diligently, faithfully and creatively, seldom questioning the legitimacy of that alien rule.

Even after being forced out of the Ottoman Empire, Armenians have preserved their docile attitude toward any foreign rule, with an inverse degree of respect for Armenian leadership.

Under foreign dominations, the challenge most of the time has been survival, and Armenians have survived individually and

that survival instinct has barred the ability for any power sharing with a fellow Armenian toward the goal of nation building.

A case in point is present Armenia itself: since its independence 20 years ago, many groups in Armenia have fought the establishment with increasingly vicious and destructive attacks and insults, unheard of in any democratic society.

Armenians cannot stand the leadership of fellow Armenians. There is a potential president in every citizen of Armenia (or so everyone believes), which does not tolerate the presidency of a single Armenian over the rest.

The first republic fell victim to violent clashes between the Bolsheviks and the ARF, leaving tens of thousands victims dead, as if we still needed the bloodshed after the Genocide.

Today, similarly, violent divisions have been ripping apart Armenia's population.

The internal divisions will only amplify outside political pressures, leading to the destruction of the third republic.

Should we meet that tragic end, Armenians in the diaspora will be left with no incentive to work towards an organized diaspora, under a unified leadership.

*December 12, 2010*

*full story [www.mirrorspectator.com](http://www.mirrorspectator.com)*

## NEW SATELLITE IMAGES CONFIRM COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF DJULFA CEMETERY



The world's largest body of scientists, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, just released satellite image comparison and analysis confirming the complete destruction of the ancient Djulfa cemetery, located in an historic Armenian exclave currently occupied by Azerbaijan. The AAAS case study, including the satellite photos, is available here. To urge UNESCO to hold Azerbaijan accountable for Djulfa's loss send an action alert from here. Five years ago this month, more than 100 uniformed Azerbaijanis were caught on tape destroying the burial monuments of the medieval Djulfa cemetery, founded in the Armenian province of Nakhichevan during the 9th century and thriving as late as the early 1600s. The soldiers were smashing Armenian monuments with sledgehammers, using a crane to remove some of the largest monuments from the ground, breaking the stones into small pieces, and dumping them into the River Araxes by a large truck. Overall, an estimated 3,000 khachkars, or intricately carved burial monuments, the craftsmanship of which is a UNESCO Intangible Heritage Tradition, were erased from the face of the earth. Azerbaijan's president called the destruction report an "absolute lie," and has maintained that official denial ever since. AAAS' release, which can be read here, conclusively confirms the destruction of a sacred place of memory. "Azerbaijan's war against indigenous Armenian heritage in Nakhichevan cannot be justified in any way—including by the gridlock in the negotiations over the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, a region that fought for independence in the early 1990s from Azerbaijan precisely so that a destruction similar to Djulfa's would not take place there," Simon Maghakyan, the founder and project Manager at the Djulfa Virtual Memorial and Museum ([www.djulfa.com](http://www.djulfa.com)), said today in a widely circulated email to media and advocacy groups.

*December 8, 2010 [www.asbarez.com](http://www.asbarez.com)*

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