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ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

December 14-20 2010

THEMA

PRESIDENT SERZH SARGSYAN PARTICIPATED AT "THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE" INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



On December 14, President Serzh Sargsyan participated at "The Crime of Genocide: Prevention, Condemnation and Elimination of Consequences" International Conference held in Armenia on December 14-15. The Conference is dedicated to the adoption of the UN Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The conference in Armenia has gathered numerous scholars from over 20 states, including renowned experts of genocide studies, and among them Dr. Leandro Despui (Argentine) - a diplomat and a scholar. By the decree of President Serzh Sargsyan Dr. Despui was awarded Mkhitar Gosh medal for his considerable contribution to the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide. "This award has been bestowed upon you through the will of our people, and I fulfilled that wish. We are grateful to you, your country and your people for sharing our pain, for creating favorable living and working conditions in Argentina for those of our compatriots, who had managed to escape the Genocide," Serzh Sargsyan noted.

Expressing gratitude for the award, Dr. Despui said that because he shares the pain of the Armenian people and defies denial of the Genocide, he has decided to fight for justice and truth and has been on that important mission for years. "I am happy to be part of this important event in Yerevan. There have been many occurrences in the struggle against denial which have brought me here," said Leandro Despui. At the International Conference "The Crime of Genocide: Prevention, Condemnation and Elimination of Consequences" President Serzh Sargsyan made a statement. "I welcome all participants of this Conference. I thank those foreign scholars who accepted our invitation and came to Armenia to take part and make proposals in the scientific discussions on the crime of genocide, its condemnation and prevention as well as the elimination of the consequences of that crime. Today, more than ever, it is necessary to take serious steps and develop efficient mechanisms for the prevention of genocides."

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"QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"RURAL POPULATION IS THE MAIN BENEFICIARY OF THIS AMENDMENT AS THEY WILL AVOID SHOULDERING AN EXTRA FINANCIAL BURDEN AND WILL BE PRIVILEGED IN THIS RESPECT"

TIGRAN SARGSYAN
PM OF ARMENIA

December 16, 2010 www.gov.am

Upcoming Events

DECEMBER 22: PM Tigran Sargsyan to meet with PM Vladimir Putin in Saint-Petersburg

DECEMBER 31: New Year 2011

JANUARY 6: Armenia marks Christmas

USEFUL LINKS

- www.president.am
- www.gov.am
- www.parliament.am
- www.mfa.am
- www.armenpress.am
- www.panarmenian.net
- www.matenadaran.am

NEWLY APPOINTED MINISTERS INTRODUCED BY THE PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan called at the ministries of finance, economy and justice to introduce newly appointed ministers Vache Gabrielyan, Tigran Davtyan and Hrair Tovmasyan. Introducing newly appointed minister Vache Gabrielyan to the staff of the Ministry of Finance, the head of government evoked the priority tasks facing the ministry and the future programs of the government.



as well as the achievements and know-how ahead of the new tide of post-crisis reforms. Introducing newly appointed Minister of Justice Hrair Tovmasyan and congratulating him on appointment, the Prime Minister said to be highly appreciative of his professional skills and human qualities. In the words of Tigran Sargsyan, Hrair Tovmasyan's deep knowledge and wide experience may help him promote the reforms stipulated in the program of the government: "It should be noted that Hrair Tovmasyan is well versed in administrative affairs since he used to be deputy minister and member of Constitutional Court staff. I am convinced that his professional experience will serve him on this post." Evoking his public statements concerning the dismissal of the former justice minister, the head of government highlighted the need for the new minister to deal with serious management-related problems facing the system. "The ministry staff are believed to live up to the tasks specified in the President's electoral platform and the program of the government," Tigran Sargsyan said. Congratulating once again Hrair Tovmasyan on appointment to such a high post, the Prime Minister said his efforts will be followed closely by the public. Newly appointed Minister of Economy Tigran Davtyan was next to be introduced to the ministry staff. Congratulating Mr. Davtyan on appointment, the Prime Minister said the new minister did not need introducing as he had had quite a long experience at Ministry of Economy: "He was a colleague of yours all along his years-long service as deputy minister, in particular. So, he is familiar with task, and I am confident that the know-how gained at the post of finance minister may help him have a deeper understanding of those challenges facing the economy and the State as a whole," the Prime Minister pointed out.

December 18, 2010, full story www.gov.am

THE BEST EVIDENCE OF NATIONAL UNITY



Hayastan All Armenian Fund's "Telethon 2010" raised USD 20,863 million donations and pledges. The money raised during the Telethon will be mostly allocated to the construction and reconstruction of the water supply system in Artsakh, as well as implementation of rural development project in the provinces of Armenia. Executive Director of Hayastan All-Armenian Fund Ara Vardanyan stated at yesterday's press conference that partic-

ipation of the citizens of Armenia in this year's telethon was especially gratifying, and it is increasing year after year. If in 2009 the number of donators from Armenia was 30 000, these including individuals and organizations, this year it reached 42 thousand 600. Besides 20 000 donations were made through a SMS (text) message, and 19 000 – through "Hay-Post" postal service.

In the meanwhile most donations and pledges, almost half of the total sum - USD 10,600 million were received from Russia including the Moscow charity dinner at the participation of the President of Armenia. Correspondingly USD 2,225 million and USD 2,112 million was donated from France and U.S. Western Region. USD 1,965 million was received from Armenia, and USD 1 million - from Artsakh.

December 18, 2010 www.hbpress.am

HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **DECEMBER 14:** HSBC Bank Armenia to assist Khosrov reserve protection **AH**
- **DECEMBER 15:** Henrik Mkhitaryan announced Shakhtar best contract player **AH**
- **DECEMBER 16:** Kyiv hosts Armenian cuisine and dances presentation **AH**
- **DECEMBER 17:** Armenian Ministry of Transport and Communication to present investment programs at TRACECA forum **AH**
- **DECEMBER 18:** Serzh Sargsyan: Azeri propaganda would have exploded like a soap bubble in case of a war **AH**
- **DECEMBER 18:** Anders Fogh Rasmussen stresses importance of renewed Armenia-NATO individual partnership program development **AH**
- **DECEMBER 20:** VivaCell-MTS to invest \$55mln in 2011 in 4G network expansion **AH**

ARMENIAN DEFENCE MINISTER SEYRAN OHANYAN MEETS THE DELEGATION OF THE US EUROPEAN COMMAND

Armenian Minister of Defence Seyran Ohanyan met the delegation headed by the deputy chief of the J5 Department of the US European Command Rear Admiral Mark Montgomery. Ambassador of the USA to Armenia Mary Johonovich also took part in the meeting. Underlining the importance of the Armenian-American cooperation in the spheres of strategic defence review, military education, peacekeeping, demining, etc, the Minister stated that it is one of the most important directions of the ARM MoD international military cooperation. Highly evaluating Armenia's participation in international peacekeeping missions and the effective cooperation with the US, Rear Admiral Mark Montgomery stated that the US European Command is ready to continue the cooperation and broaden its scopes.

December 17, 2010 www.mil.am

RA GOVERNMENT DISCUSSES PROBLEMS FACED BY LOCAL PRODUCERS



Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan presided over a meeting with participation of members of the Union of Local Producers of Armenia and Committee for Financial, Economic and Budgetary Issues of the Public Council. “I strongly believe that the meeting will provide opportunities for presenting problems and matters concerning further development of Armenia’s economy, as well as tasks faced by the

government,” said Tigran Sargsyan. The parties exchanged opinions concerning efficient implementation of industrial policy in Armenia. Specifically, tax administration, increase in export volumes, stimulation of small and medium enterprises, as well as tourism development and innovation technologies were in the focus of the meeting. The Armenian Prime Minister said it is necessary to submit the offers in written form, saying that they will be included in the projects, which are envisaged to be implemented in the near future. Mr. Sargsyan also attached importance to regular organization of similar meetings, stressing that they create prerequisites for adoption of correct decisions on matters discussed, the RA governmental press service reported.

December 14, 2010 www.panarmenian.net

ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS SPANISH PARLIAMENT



Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian, currently on a visit to Spain, met with the members of the country’s parliamen-

tary foreign relations committee. The meeting focused on the development of bilateral and inter-parliamentary ties, as well as regional and international issues. Spanish MPs gave high assessment to the opening of the Armenian Embassy in Madrid, noting that the opening will promote development of cooperation. Further, Nalbandian visited the Armenian Embassy to meet with the representatives of local Armenian community, ministerial press service reported.

December 17, 2010 www.panarmenian.net

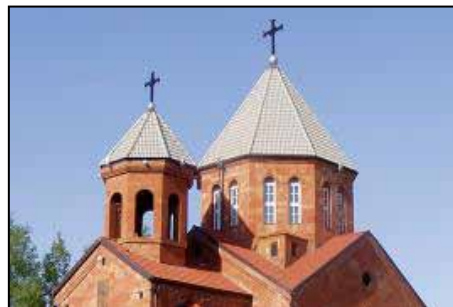
SAVIOR ARMENIAN CHURCH TO BE CONSECRATED IN NIZHNY NOVGOROD IN 2011

Savior (Amenaprkich) Armenian Church will be consecrated in Nizhny Novgorod in 2011.

According to representative of the Armenian community of Nizhny Novgorod Tigran Shahnazaryan, the basic construction works were implemented in 2010.

The rest works of the first construction stage are envisaged to be completed in summer-autumn 2011. While the second stage envisaging construction of administrative and educational wings are scheduled to be implemented in 2012-2015.

The church construction was launched in December 2008. The church build-



ing construction was envisaged to be completed in 2010. However, due to problems with funds, it will be finished in 2011, Nizhny Novgorod Armenians portal reported.

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Today, more than ever, it is necessary to take serious steps and develop efficient mechanisms for the prevention of genocides. And today, more than ever, the impunity of different political administrations and states, which have committed the crime of genocide, absence of international condemnation, lack of adequate mechanisms or their ineptitude created a situation when the mankind, along with other grave challenges, still faces the threat of new genocides. Bitter lessons of the Armenian Genocide are not just memories in the history of the world: they were amplified by the horrors of the Holocaust, genocides in Rwanda, Darfur and many other tragedies. Unfortunately, genocide denial and oblivion are still present in our world. Political expediency and short-sighted timeserving often prevail over the necessity to adopt and implement sound and reasonable decisions. Issues pertinent to the prevention and condemnation of genocides, as well as elimination of their consequences, should be put on the agenda of international deliberations. Civilized world should demonstrate an ability to fight united against this menace. Neither the venue, nor the title of the conference held in Yerevan are accidental. It is true that chronologically the Armenian Genocide occurred several decades before the adoption of the UN Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; however its international, including legal and ethical repercussions became the foundation for the development and adoption of the aforementioned Convention. Rafael Lemkin says on this, “Until now, the government could treat its citizens as it saw fit. Millions and thousands of hundreds of Muslims and Jews, Armenians and Slavs, Greeks and Russians, swarthy Africans and fair Poles perished in this crime. The world come to a decision that genocide is a crime which falls within the scope of international law, and that to prevent and punish this “crime of the crimes” the convention must be signed by the member states. Today, we observe another phenomenon: along with the attempts to review historical facts, which were scientifically proved by official historiography and have received corresponding international assessment, some countries are trying to fashion stories of “their own genocides.”

December 14, 2010

full speech www.president.am

CABINET COMMENDS AMIR'S CALL FOR NATIONAL UNITY

The cabinet on Monday commended His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah's call to Kuwaitis to pursue constitutional and legal channels to address differences, as well as expressing regret at recent events during what it called "illegal assemblies" in Kuwait. The ministers also voiced immense appreciation for the role played by the security forces' in preserving order. The cabinet meeting, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah, saw ministers expressing their appreciation of HH the Amir's instructions to maintain security and stability in Kuwait, and to confront any illegal attempts to cause chaos and undermine national security. The Amir's instructions reflected his enthusiasm for maintaining the country's security and stability, and his strong desire to preserve democracy

in line with the constitution and law, said Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Roudhan Al-Roudhan in a statement issued after the cabinet meeting. The cabinet members praised Sunday's meeting between the Amir and Editor-in-Chief of local newspapers, during which the monarch reiterated his commitment to the constitution, and asserted that everybody should follow the proper constitutional and legal channels to resolve their differences within the country's parliament or courts, said Al-Roudhan. The Council of Ministers called on the media to highlight HH the Amir's instructions to reject discord, calling for coexistence and harmony within Kuwaiti society, added the minister, suggesting that the media should stress the need for national unity to confront the challenges facing the country.

December 14, 2010 www.kuwaittimes.com

CONTROVERSIAL GENOCIDE RESOLUTION MAY HIT FLOOR OF HOUSE IN FINAL DAYS

Lobbying groups have been on alert this weekend as rumors abound that a controversial resolution strongly opposed by the White House to recognize the 1915 killings of 1.5 million Armenians as genocide will come to the House floor in the last days of the 111th Congress. Rep. Adam Schiff's (D-Calif.) resolution, which "calls upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide," passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee on March 4 by slim margin, 23-22. It wasn't the first such resolution to try to make it through Congress, but the passage in committee angered Turkey to the point that it called its ambassador back to Ankara for a time. Bringing the genocide measure to a vote this week would pit Democratic leaders against the White House. A senior House aide told The Hill this weekend that "no decisions have been made" on whether the resolution will be added to the House schedule this week. The House is returning because the continuing resolution to fund the government is only good through Tuesday. Other sources assert that Democratic leaders were vote-counting on the geno-

cide resolution up through the weekend. Lobbyists on both sides of the heated issue have been acting on indications that it could come up for a vote Tuesday or Wednesday. ANCA told The Hill that it is looking to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), who has advocated the Armenian position, and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), one of the 148 bipartisan co-sponsors on Schiff's resolution, to bring it to the floor this week. The group added that thousands of calls have been placed to Pelosi and Hoyer's offices to lobby for the vote. "We join with the remaining survivors of the Armenian Genocide and their families across America in looking to Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer to bring the Armenian Genocide Resolution to the House floor for a vote this coming Tuesday," said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian in a statement to The Hill. "We are pleased that this human rights measure enjoys the backing of a bipartisan majority, and look forward to the U.S. House finally voting to end Turkey's 'gag-rule' on America's commemoration of this crime against humanity. No nation deserves a veto over U.S. human rights policy." The proposition of the contested resolution coming to a vote days before Christmas, when there are fewer members in town, angered Turkish groups.

December 19, 2010

full story www.thehill.com

ARMENIANS DENOUNCE KOBE BRYANT DEAL WITH TURKISH AIRLINES



The business deal looked fairly straightforward. Last week, American basketball star Kobe Bryant agreed to become the new celebrity face of Turkish Airlines, a growing international carrier. Though he has admitted to never having visited Turkey, the Los Angeles Lakers guard said in a news release that "Turkey is a country rich in natural beauty and thousands of years of cultural history, and I'm proud to partner with Turkish Airlines to bring that majesty to people around the world." Within days, however, Bryant's decision was being denounced by Armenian groups in North America and in Los Angeles, which is the hometown not only of the Lakers, but also of the largest ethnic Armenian community outside of Armenia. "Turkish Deal Will Make Kobe the Face of Oppression and Injustice" and "Kobe Bryant's Direct Flight to Inhumanity," announced the website of the Armenian Youth Federation. Armenian diaspora groups in North America have launched a media and Internet campaign urging Bryant to drop his Turkish Airlines deal. In Toronto, about 30 Canadian-Armenians protested against Bryant, holding signs that said "Kobe: Do the Right Thing," outside the stadium where the Lakers played the Raptors on Sunday. What appeared to be a standard and presumably lucrative celebrity endorsement has run headlong into a passionate dispute over a bloody chapter in history that took place in the highlands of eastern Turkey nearly a century ago. Armenian groups and many scholars argue that starting in 1915, Turks committed genocide, when more than a million ethnic Armenians were massacred in the waning days of the Ottoman Empire.

December 20, 2010

full story www.edition.cnn.com

AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKER J. MICHAEL HAGOPIAN DIES AT 97

Armenian-American documentary filmmaker J. Michael Hagopian, whose 70 educational and documentary films have won more than 160 national and international awards, including two Emmy nominations, died Dec. 10 in his Thousand Oaks, Calif., home. He was 97. Hagopian was a Genocide survivor who dedicated his life to the visual documentation of the Turkish extermination of 1.5 million Armenians in 1915. Over a 40-year period, he filmed nearly 400 interviews of survivors of and witnesses to the Armenian Genocide, traveling around the world to record their accounts in 10 languages. He established the Armenian Film Foundation in 1979 as a non-profit, educational, and cultural organization dedicated to the documentation in motion pictures of Armenian heritage and life.



During the past several years, his mission had been to preserve the film footage of those eyewitness interviews. On April 13, 2010, he and his wife, Antoinette Hagopian, and the Armenian Film Foundation signed an historic agreement with The USC Shoah Foundation Institute for the preservation and dissemination of the Genocide testimonies on the internet. [December 18, 2010 Lousapats N 864](#)

ANCA CONTINUES TO CALL FOR U.S. HOUSE VOTE ON GENOCIDE RESOLUTION

Armenian American and anti-genocide activists across the United States continue to mobilize in support of a possible vote on the Armenian Genocide Resolution, H.Res.252, in the final days of the Congressional session, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA). "We continue to look to the House Democratic leadership to schedule a vote allowing a bipartisan majority to adopt the Armenian Genocide Resolution, honoring the victims of this crime and to paying tribute to the proud legacy of America's humanitarian response to this atrocity," said Aram Hamparian, executive director of the ANCA. "It's long past time for America to reject Turkey's 'gag rule' on the recognition of the Armenian Genocide." Earlier today, Majority Leader Hoyer announced that the House is set to adjourn for the week on Friday evening, returning on Tues., Dec. 21 to complete the legislative business for the 111th Congress. Thousands of anti-genocide activists across the U.S. have been contacting Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer and their Congressional Representatives, in support of Congress passing this human rights measure. Last week, Armenian American celebrities Kim Kardashian and Serge Tankian urged millions of their Twitter, Facebook, and website followers to bring H.Res.252 to the Floor. House Resolution 252, introduced by Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) and spearheaded by

House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Howard Berman (D-Calif.), Congressional Armenian Caucus co-chairman Frank Pallone (D-N.J.), Rep. Brad Sherman (D-Calif.), Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.), and Rep. Jackie Speier (D-Calif.) along with bipartisan base of Congressional leaders from across the U.S. including incoming House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.), incoming House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) and Foreign Affairs Committee Member Ed Royce (R-Calif.). The resolution currently has 149 co-sponsors. The House Foreign Affairs Committee adopted the measure in March 2010. Similar legislation was adopted at the committee level in the U.S. House in 2000, 2005, and 2007. The Armenian Genocide Resolution "calls upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide and the consequences of the failure to realize a just resolution." It goes on to urge the president, in his "annual message commemorating the Armenian Genocide issued on or about April 24, to accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide and to recall the proud history of United States intervention in opposition to the Armenian Genocide."

[December 17, 2010 www.armeniaweekly.com](#)


AN APPEAL TO THE UN ON DJULFA'S DESTRUCTION

Armenia's Representation to the United Nations, in cooperation with the Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Association of the Eastern United States, issued an appeal on Wednesday on the fifth anniversary of the destruction of Armenian monuments by the Azeri Army. The dossier, which was prepared on December 9 and presented by Armenia's Ambassador to the UN, Karen Nazaryan, also includes a 90-page bilingual (English and French) booklet detailing the history and cultural significance of the Armenian monuments in Djulfa. Below is the text of the appeal: The current Nakhichevan Autonomous Re-



public of Azerbaijan has been a historic part of the Armenian homeland for well over 2500 years. Its Armenian name translates into "the place of descent," in reference to the landing of the Noah's Ark on the adjacent Mount Ararat. It has been an integral part of Armenian life from as early as 521 B.C. and as late as the first Armenian Republic from till 1920. The Armenian inhabitants of this region have witnessed many tragic event over their history, including their forced removal from their lands by Sassanid Persians in the fourth century A.D., the decision of the invading Arabs to force them to leave their lands by gathering several hundred Armenian nobles and their families, lock them up in churches and burn them alive, and crucify the rest. Armenians of Nakhichevan were subjected to further bloodshed, culminating to the many wars and massacres of the World War I era, where Nakhichevan was placed under the control of the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan to appease and accommodate the Turkish government by the newly formed and relatively weak Soviet Russia. While bloodshed and war stopped following the placement of Nakhichevan under Soviet rule, discrimination and economic pressure against the indigenous Armenian population went on as a systemic means to drive them out of their homeland.

[December 16, 2010 www.asbarez.com](#)

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