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ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

February 15-21, 2011

THEMA

PRESIDENT SARGSYAN RECEIVED THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA YANG JIECHI



On February 17, President Serzh Sargsyan received the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Yang Jiechi. The President of Armenia welcomed the guest and expressed confidence that his visit to our country will serve as a new impetus for further development of relations between our two countries and will facilitate the implementation of the agreements reached with President Hu Jintao. President Sargsyan expressed gratitude to the leadership and people of China for the assistance provided to Armenia from day one of our independence and underscored that Armenia is interested in deepening relations with China. "We are also interested in China's enhanced participation in the regional, economic processes and would be happy to see Your country's greater involvement in these processes," said President Sargsyan. "Armenia is a friendly nation for China and a reliable partner. Development of our relations and support for Armenia is among China's foreign policy priorities. We stand ready to continue to support Armenia in her economic development and

facilitate cooperation in different areas where we see open perspectives and great potential. I also know that You had very important negotiations with the President of China Hu Jintao in Shanghai. It is really important for our two states to define new guiding lines and make decisions regarding the development of bilateral relations," said Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi during his meeting with the President of Armenia. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of China noted that on a number of significant international and regional issues Armenia and China maintain similar positions. In addition, the two states interact successfully in the framework of international organizations. Mr. Yang Jiechi thanked President Sargsyan for accepting invitation and visiting China for the opening of two very important for China events – 29th Olympic Games in Beijing and Shanghai-Expo-2010. He noted that at the Expo-2010 the Armenian pavilion was rather impressive and had a large number of visitors. He added that at the Olympic Games too the Armenian athletes were successful and congratulated the President of Armenia on this occasion.

February 17, 2011 www.president.am

"QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"NO EFFECTIVE TOOLS ARE AVAILABLE AGAINST INFLATION WORLDWIDE. THIS IS NOT AN ARMENIAN OR A GEORGIAN PHENOMENON AS IT IS CAUSED BY THE SITUATION AT HAND IN THE WORLD MARKETS."

TIGRAN SARGSYAN
PRIMEMINISTER OF RA

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY 23-24: U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg will arrive to Armenia

FEBRUARY 25: Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan will leave for St Petersburg

FEBRUARY 25-28: "Bridge 2011" economic forum to be hosted in Tsaghkadzor

MARCH 5: President Serzh Sargsyan will meet with Ilham Aliiev in Sochi

USEFUL LINKS

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ARMENIAN, GEORGIAN PRIME MINISTERS MEET IN YEREVAN

Georgian Prime Minister Nikoloz Gialauri-led delegation arrived in Yerevan earlier today on a single-day working visit. Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan met his Georgian counterpart at Zvartnots international airport. Prior to the two delegations' extended meeting, the prime ministers had private talks at the Office of Government. At their last January 22-23 meeting in Yerevan, the Presidents



of our brotherly peoples. It is the duty of the two governments to provide specific economic mechanisms enabling closer economic, social and cultural bonds." Thanking his Armenian counterpart for a warm welcome, the Prime Minister of Georgia said: "It has always been a pleasure to meet you and suggest new steps of cooperation. We can really boast high-level political relations, and I am convinced that we will do so further on. We have been meeting in different formats including the working and official visits, as well as the intergovernmental sessions. I am hopeful that today's working visit will outline new steps toward boosting the bilateral ties. Desirous of inviting you to my country, I suggest holding the next session of the intergovernmental commission in Georgia." The parties went on to discuss a bilateral agenda, including the progress in customs relations. An arrangement was made to proceed to talks on the signing of a border checkpoint sharing agreement. The transport-related agenda was highlighted in a bid to facilitate the cross-border traffic of goods and passengers between the two countries. A broad range of economic cooperation-related issues were taken up during the meeting. Following the extended meeting, the two prime ministers gave a joint press conference.

February 16, 2011 www.gov.am

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS EDWARD NALBANDIAN RECEIVED THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE PRESIDENT OF IRAN



On the February 16, the Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian received the delegation headed by the Special Envoy of the President of Iran, Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Reza Rauf Sheybani. Welcoming the guest, Edward Nalbandian expressed satisfaction with the high-level and dynamically developing cooperation characteristic to the Armenian-Iranian relations. Expressing gratitude for the reception, Mohammad Reza Rauf Sheybani conveyed the welcomes and wishes of the Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Ali

gia agreed upon a follow-up meeting to be held between the two prime ministers to address the issues high on bilateral agenda. Addressing the extended meeting, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan stated in part: "I am convinced that your visit will help strengthen Armenian-Georgian friendly relations. We are fostering a high-level political dialog and should make every effort to expand and deepen relationship to the benefit

of our brotherly peoples. It is the duty of the two governments to provide specific economic mechanisms enabling closer economic, social and cultural bonds." Thanking his Armenian counterpart for a warm welcome, the Prime Minister of Georgia said: "It has always been a pleasure to meet you and suggest new steps of cooperation. We can really boast high-level political relations, and I am convinced that we will do so further on. We have been meeting in different formats including the working and official visits, as well as the intergovernmental sessions. I am hopeful that today's working visit will outline new steps toward boosting the bilateral ties. Desirous of inviting you to my country, I suggest holding the next session of the intergovernmental commission in Georgia." The parties went on to discuss a bilateral agenda, including the progress in customs relations. An arrangement was made to proceed to talks on the signing of a border checkpoint sharing agreement. The transport-related agenda was highlighted in a bid to facilitate the cross-border traffic of goods and passengers between the two countries. A broad range of economic cooperation-related issues were taken up during the meeting. Following the extended meeting, the two prime ministers gave a joint press conference.

February 16, 2011 www.gov.am

Akbar Salehi to Edward Nalbandian. The Armenian Foreign Minister and the Special Envoy of the President of Iran exchanged views on the upcoming agenda of bilateral contacts. The interlocutors touched upon the work of the Armenian-Iranian Intergovernmental Commission and mentioned that it has an important contribution to the economic cooperation, elaboration and implementation of joint programs. They also discussed the possibilities of creation of permanent mechanism of the consultations between the Foreign Affairs Ministries of the two countries. The meaningful interaction developed between the two countries, the programs implemented jointly and the perspective projects in the spheres of energy and transport were touched upon in the course of the meeting. The sides exchanged views on the regional issues.

February 16, 2011 www.mfa.am

HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- FEBRUARY 15: Situation in Iran won't affect Armenian-Iranian economic cooperation AH
- FEBRUARY 16: Armenian culture exhibit opens in Edinburgh AH
- FEBRUARY 17: AMAP works at creation of audio tours for Armenia's sights AH
- FEBRUARY 18: A park in Valence to be named after Charles Aznavour AH
- FEBRUARY 19: Feb 19 marks 7th anniversary of Gurgun Margaryan murder AH
- FEBRUARY 20: Inflation suppression discussed in Tsaghkadzor resort of Armenia AH
- FEBRUARY 21: Average monthly salary totaled AMD 104,051 in Armenia in January 2011

MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF RA RECEIVES SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ACTORS



On February 16, ARM Minister of Defence Seyran Ohanyan received those science and culture actors participating in the program "Pages of History and Culture", NGOs cooperating with the Ministry of Defence, representatives of educational-cultural institutions, and members of the Public Council adjunct to the Minister of Defence. During the meeting, they discussed the work done in 2010, and that to be done this year. Talking about the work towards military-patriotic and cognitive education of servicemen, Seyran Ohanyan greatly emphasized the importance of public support to that work. Intellectuals and heads of educational-cultural institutions participating in the program also made speeches.

February 16 2011, www.mil.am

PARTIES TO ARMENIA'S POLITICAL COALITION SIGN DECLARATION



On February 17, at the Presidential Palace the parties to the Political Coalition – the Republican Party of Armenia, Bargavach Hayastan party (BA) and Orinats Yerkir party (OY) - signed the Declaration of the Political Coalition. On behalf of the Republican Party it was signed by RA President, Chairman of the Party Serzh Sargsyan, on behalf of Bargavach Hayastan - by Chairman of the Party Gagik Tsarukian, and on behalf of Orinats Yerkir - by Chairman of the Party Arthur Baghdassarian, the RA presidential press service reported. “Three years ago the RPA, PA and OY political parties formed a political coalition which assumed responsibilities for Armenia’s political, economic and social development. The Political Coalition was formed when the country was going through difficult times. The formation of the Coalition, expression of will and resolve by its members and collective acceptance of responsibilities for the actions of the authorities has played a significant role in ensuring stability and normal life in the country. It has also become an important factor in successfully defying the external and internal challenges facing the Republic of Armenia, including the events in South Ossetia and preclusion of a

serious social downturn conditioned by the severe global financial and economic crisis. Political Coalition restates that it is important to withstand jointly all potential external threats, carry on with the structural changes in the country, provide them with new momentum and guarantee tangible results. Political Coalition declares its resolve to make more courageous steps toward ensuring Armenia’s post-crisis progressive development and improvement of well-being of our people, placing special emphasis on comprehensive fight against corruption and significant reduction of the shadow economy. Political Coalition underscores the importance of unity in this process and reiterates its political responsibility for these changes. The parties of the Coalition are united in meeting these changes and in the upcoming parliamentary elections will not strive to increase their political weight through contesting against each other or changing correlation of forces within the Coalition. The Coalition partners are confident that sustained implementation of the reforms will further increase the political role of the Coalition and public trust toward it, resulting in the amplified participation of the Coalition at the RA National Assembly after the parliamentary elections. Furthermore, at the presidential elections the Political Coalition will come up with one single nomination in the person of the current President, creating thus guarantees of further continuance of the changes and sustainable development of our country for the next five years,” the Declaration reads.

February 17, 2011 www.panarmenian.net

FACEBOOK PROMOTES DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN ARMENIA



Though promoting the development of civil society in Armenia, Facebook cannot be turned into a tool for implementing a revolution in the country, according to information security expert. As Samvel Martirosyan told a news conference in Yerevan, social

networks helped to organised civil actions in Armenia, however only 1-1,5% of the users supporting the action online are ready to defend their position in real life.

The expert ruled out the possibility of controlling social networks in Armenia as an unnecessary effort requiring too many resources. “Experience shows people keep looking for ways to get around restrictions imposed to receive access to banned social networks,” he said.

Out of 132 000 registered Facebook users, only 20% are active, the expert noted.

February 18, 2011 www.panarmenian.net

MAXIM VENGEROV DOESN'T INTEND TO STOP PLAYING VIOLIN



Music is a unique language, capable of conveying feelings without words, world-known violinist and conductor, Grammy laureate Maxim Vengerov said.

“To me, the violin in an extension of a soul, the bow is an extension of a hand. I take my violin along to every one of my journeys,” the musician told a news conference in Yerevan.

“Whatever the rumors may be, I will never stop playing the violin. That would be equal to refusing to speak my native language,” he stressed.

February 18, 2011, www.panarmenian.net

BAKO SAHAKYAN: REVIVAL OF ARTSAKH STARTED 23 YEARS AGO

Artsakh Republic President Bako Sahakyan issued an address to the nation on occasion the Artsakh Revival Day.

“On behalf of the republic's authorities and myself I cordially congratulate you on this very dear and memorable holiday – the Artsakh Revival Day,” Mr. Sahakyan said. “February 20, 1988 marked the lives of Artsakh people as the beginning of the revival of nationwide unity and freedom-loving spirit becoming a truly national holiday. On this very day we announced to the world our resoluteness to live freely and independently in our own soil and to build a sovereign and democratic state. It was an appeal to protect human rights and freedoms, a peaceful, just and legal claim corresponding to the fundamental norms and principles of international law.

Our path has been hard and difficult. Artsakh found itself in the thick of the imposed war that brought about heavy destructions and numerous victims. The best sons of the Armenian people sacrificed their lives for our national liberation movement.

February 19, 2011 www.panarmenian.net

RUSSIA BUILDING NUCLEAR POWER STATION IN ARMENIA



Russia confirmed its initiative to play the leading role in constructing a new nuclear power station in Armenia in particular Russia is prepared to construct and finance a so called nuclear island for the energy block. As Armenian energy minister Armen Movsisian

thinks that the Russian designed and constructed nuclear reactors are the best in the world. Movsisian mentioned that the new plant will be launched in 2016-17 and the existing block will be working until this period of time. As it is known, Russia and Armenia agreed on the construction of the nuclear power station during the Russian President's visit to Yerevan last August. USA has also expressed its interest in the participation of American companies in constructing Armenia's nuclear power station.

February 18, 2011 www.messenger.com.ge

CASINO MOGUL KIRK KERKORIAN DONATES \$100 MILLION TO UCLA



The university will be able to use Kirk Kerkorian's \$100-million gift for medical research, scholarships and other projects. University officials will also be able to administer another \$100 million for other charitable causes. Last month, the university received a \$100-million gift from alumnus Meyer Luskin. A foundation established by billionaire investor and Las Vegas casino mogul Kirk Kerkorian is giving \$100 million to UCLA for medical research, scholarships and other projects and will allow the university to administer an additional \$100 million for charitable causes around the country, officials announced Monday. The gift comes less than three weeks after the Westwood campus received \$100 million from Meyer Luskin, a UCLA alumnus who earned a fortune in the animal feed business. The Luskin donation will be split between UCLA's school of public affairs and the construction of an on-campus conference center and hotel. Under terms of the agreement announced

Monday, the \$200 million in assets of Kerkorian's Lincy Foundation will be transferred to a new organization called the Dream Fund, which will be based at UCLA. The Westwood campus will be able to use half the total for its own research and student support without any specific requirements, a flexibility especially welcome during the UC system's current budget crisis, administrators said. Get the monthly that has L.A. talking. Subscribe to Los Angeles Times Magazine at a special introductory rate. Kerkorian, 93, a prominent Armenian American, founded the Lincy Foundation (named for his daughters Linda and Tracy) to aid victims of the devastating 1988 earthquake in Armenia. Since then, the Beverly Hills-based foundation has broadened its focus and given more than \$1 billion to benefit education, scientific and anti-poverty efforts around the world, in addition to aiding Armenian charities, according to its president, Jay Rakow. Last week, it gave \$10.5 million to the Glendale-based United Armenian Fund, to help reconstruct schools in Armenia's quake zone. Asked why UCLA was chosen as the beneficiary, Rakow said the foundation has given the campus about \$70 million in previous gifts and has been pleased with the way the money was used. "Mr. Kerkorian has tremendous confidence in their ability to use these funds in a responsible and productive way for the types of charitable purposes that the Lincy Foundation has always pursued," Rakow said Monday.

February 15, 2010,
full story www.latimes.com

NAGORNO-KARABAKH— A DISREGARDED CONFLICT



Of all the so-called "frozen conflicts" in the EU's eastern neighbourhood, Nagorno Karabakh is the most dangerous. Being far from frozen it represents the greatest threat to security and stability in the South Caucasus. Yet while the EU has become increasingly engaged in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh hardly figures on the radar. Rather the EU prefers to sit on the sidelines, supporting the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group (a tripartite body co-chaired by the US, France and Russia) which has been acting as a mediator between Azerbaijan and Armenia since 1992. However, with peace-talks stalled, increased clashes and saber-rattling on the line of contact, and spiraling defence spending there is growing concern that a new, most likely accidental war, may be around the corner. While nobody expects the EU to solve the conflict it could at least become more engaged in preventing war, given the region is part of its European Neighbourhood Policy. This was the message of the European Parliament's 2010 Resolution on the South Caucasus. A message which has pretty much been ignored. If the EU continues with its complacent, seemingly unconcerned attitude, deluding itself that the status quo is sustainable it may find itself facing another August 2008 scenario: cleaning up after a bloody war. Only this time, unlike the Russia-Georgia conflict, it is unlikely to be short with neither side scoring a quick victory. While Azerbaijan may have increased its defence spending to over \$3 billion this does not guarantee success with Armenia being better placed strategically, holding the higher, more mountainous ground. It could result in a very protracted conflict, sucking in other regional actors, destroying crucial infrastructure including key energy transit routes, and costing thousands of lives. While Karabakh is legally part of Azerbaijan, since the 1988-1994 war it has been under Armenian control, with seven surrounding Azerbaijani regions also occupied.

February 20, 2011
full story www.neurope.eu

IPHONE APP “ARMENIAN MONUMENT” DESIGNED FOR ARMENIAN GENOCIDE RECOGNITION



Motion graphic artist Alex Nisanian has started creating the “Armenian Monument,” a free iPhone app dedicated to the recognition of the Armenian Genocide. The app will have four basic components: The default page will feature an animated rendition of the eternal flame at the Dzidzernagapert Genocide Memorial in Armenia, with a contemporary beat produced by DJ Bei-Ru using duduk samples. There will also be a history section, covering the 1915-1923 Armenian Genocide, as well as a list of countries that have recognized the crime as genocide. A latest News section will provide app users with breaking developments on Genocide recognition efforts worldwide and give users the ability to share the stories on their social networks. Nisanian describes the app as more than

just a tool to inform and educate, but rather a tool to take action on pressing issues in a call-to-action section, “It’s designed to get the whole community actively involved towards Genocide awareness and Genocide recognition.” To keep costs low, Nisanian has already designed and animated almost all the graphics necessary, but needs assistance in writing iPhone code for known as Objective-C. Thus Nisanian is utilizing Kickstarter is an online threshold pledge system for funding this endeavor. The ‘Armenian Monument’ Kickstarter fund-drive ends on February 27, giving Nisanian less than a month to raise the \$3,500 needed to finance the app, with a launching target date of April 24, 2011. People who donate to ‘Armenian Monument’ on Kickstarter will receive rewards such as commemorative shirts, stickers, and recognition as a contributor within the app and on its blog. Nisanian says he wants the project to be an open and collaborative effort that engages and benefits the entire Armenian community. “I’m open to suggestions for features, as well for news sources to feature in the ‘Latest News’ section,” he said. The app’s news feed is published on ArmenianMonument.com.

February 14 2011, www.massispost.com

ARMENIAN HOCKEY: SOMETHING HAS TO BE SAID



Armenia is still a small country in the eyes of the international sports community. Yes, it is strong in chess, weightlifting, and wrestling, did well in European competitions in those sports, and was represented at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing and the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. The Armenian national football team is also doing well and looks to be on the right track to qualifying for the 2012 European Cup competition. Armenia’s sports reputation, it seems, is improving. Armenian Hockey: Something Has to Be Said Then, there’s the

Armenia national hockey team. Yes, Armenia has a national hockey team that plays on the international stage. Shocking, right?

A member of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) since 1999, Armenia, who plays in Division III, the lowest division of international hockey, has a long way to go if they want to join teams like Sweden, Russia, and Canada in Division I and play in the Olympics.

Currently ranked 49th out of 49 teams, Armenia has had more than a few difficulties that has kept it from competing in games and tournaments. In 2003, the team wasn’t able to play in the D-III World Championship tournament, held in New Zealand, after failing to secure visas to enter the country.

February 18, 2011

full story www.armeniaweekly.com

AZERBAIJAN RECOGNIZED KARABAKH WHEN IT SIGNED CEASE FIRE ACCORD



Azerbaijan effectively recognized Karabakh’s independence when its representative negotiated with and signed a cease fire agreement with the authorities of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, explained Armenia’s Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharyan who was responding to statements made to the contrary by Azerbaijan’s president in an interview with Mir TV.

In an interview with the Mir Interstate TV and Radio Company, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev stated that “Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity must be restored.” Aliyev’s statements are aimed to thwart the negotiation process and distort the essence of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. They are attempts to avoid responsibility for Azerbaijan’s aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh and ethnic cleansing, explained Kocharyan, adding that Nagorno-Karabakh will never be part of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan’s statements on its commitment to the peace process have always been false. Azerbaijan unleashed war, but later it itself had to ask for ceasefire talks – and it was with the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, said Kocharyan, who gave a counter interview to the Mir Interstate TV and Radio Company.

During that interview, Kocharyan read a document dated September 3, 1993, signed by Baku. “The Azerbaijani leaders authorized Vice-Chairman of the Supreme Council A. Jalilov to negotiate for a meeting between the leader of Azerbaijan and the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. That document was signed by Chairman of the Supreme Council, Acting President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev.”

“After Jalilov was authorized, the necessary powers were entrusted to Arkady Ghukazyan, the then foreign minister of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Jalilov and Ghukasyan held talks. They signed a bilateral communique that had two points.

February 17 2011,

full story www.asbarez.com

GEORGIAN PM: NO PLANS TO SELL CONTROLLING STAKES IN NORTH-SOUTH GAS PIPELINE



MNika Gilauri reiterated during this visit to Yerevan on February 16, that Georgia would not sell controlling stake in North-South Gas Pipeline through which Armenia receives gas from Russia, Yerevan-based news agency, Novosti Armenia, reported.

“I was asked this question previously for number of times and I want to state, that the Georgian government will not be selling controlling stakes of the gas pipeline. There are strategic assets, which the Georgian government will continue to manage,” Gilauri was quoted as saying at a news conference in Yerevan in response to a journalist’s question. The idea of initial public offering of minority shares of Georgian

Oil and Gas Corporation (GOGC), which operates the North-South Gas Pipeline, was first voiced by PM Gilauri last summer, when the legislative process was underway in the Georgian Parliament for removing the pipeline from the list of “strategic assets”, hence paving the way for potential sale of its shares.

In January Azerbaijani news agency, Azeri-Press Agency (APA), reported quoting the president of Azerbaijan’s state-owned oil firm SOCAR, Rovnag Abdullayev, that the company was interested in purchasing the North-South Gas Pipeline.

Alexander Khetaguri, the Georgian energy minister, said in an interview with Reuters earlier this month that Georgia was considering registering 25% of GOGC’s shares on international stock exchange as a part of an IPO process possibly next year. He, however, also added that issuing of the corporation’s Eurobonds instead of IPO was not also ruled out.

February 16, 2011 www.civil.ge

GEORGIA WON'T SELL NORTH-SOUTH GAS MAIN: PM NIKOLOZ GILAUURI

Georgian Prime Minister Nikoloz Gilauri said Wednesday that his government does not plan to sell the gas pipeline connecting Russia with Armenia.

Gilauri said Georgian authorities have no intention of selling the controlling stocks of the strategic facilities, including the gas pipeline which is the major source of natural gas in Armenia.

Gilauri spoke at a news conference after a meeting with his Armenian counterpart Tigran Sargsyan.

Media reports in Georgia, however, have said that Georgia is planning to sell between 10 to 15 percent of the North-South Gas Pipeline main.

Local Armenian media have reported that Pavel Kublashvili, chairman of the Georgian parliamentary commit-



tee for legal affairs, had proposed sales of the gas main.


Earlier this month, Georgian Energy Minister Alexander Khetaguri said that Georgia was considering registering up to 25 percent of the North-South gas main shares for sale on international stock exchange markets.

February 16, 2011 english.people.com.cn

GEORGIAN PM MEETS THE ARMENIAN PRESIDENT AND THE PM

Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri paid a one-day visit to Armenia on February 16. In the frames of the visit Gilauri met the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan and the Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan. Speaking at a joint press conference after meeting with his Armenian counterpart, Gilauri noted that the sides discussed issues related with the joint management of the state border and a new tax code adopted in Georgia. “We discussed other infrastructural projects, which are very important for our cooperation in the future,” Gilauri noted. The Georgian Prime Minister said that the sides shared their experience in terms of inflation processes. “Nowadays inflation is not only an issue in Georgia or Armenia. It is a regional and global phenomenon,” he stated. Gilauri reiterated the position of the officials in Tbilisi that Georgia is not planning to sell a North-South pipeline, through which Armenia receives natural gas from Russia. “I have been asked this question many times. I would like to say that the Georgian Government will not sell control of the shares of the pipeline. There are some strategic objects, the management of which will be carried out by the Georgian government,” he noted. In terms of joint management of state borders between Armenia and Georgia, Gilauri said that political cooperation has already been “settled.” “This issue consists of several components, our working groups are already dealing with them. From June 1 of last year we already launched a joint management system with Turkey and I hope that this issue will be regulated between Armenia and Georgia too,” he noted. At the meeting with the Armenian President, Gilauri passed him an invitation from the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, Sargsyan’s administration reported. The Armenian President stressed the importance of bilateral meetings, saying that “it is a good opportunity to develop relations and extend cooperation in various fields.” He pointed out that in Armenian-Georgian economic relations there is a “positive trends,” however noted, that “in comparison with the existing potential, the economic relations between the two countries cannot be considered satisfactory.” The Armenian President called for “activating efforts in this direction.”

February 18, 2011 www.messenger.com.ge

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