



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

POLITICS

1. HOVIK ABRAHAMIAN: CROATIA IS CLOSE TO ARMENIA WITH ITS HISTORY AND LOYALTY TO CHRISTIAN VALUES [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

RA NA Speaker Hovik Abrahamian at the May 22 meeting with President of Croatia Stjepan Mesic attached importance to deepening and development of relations with Croatia in political and economic spheres. He said that Croatia is close to Armenia with its history and loyalty to Christian values.

According to the report of the RA NA Public Relations Department, the interlocutors attached importance to parliamentary diplomacy's role in the issue of development of bilateral relations. The sides also touched upon issues regarding development of trade and economic relations between the two countries, discussed the influence of the financial-economic crisis on the two countries.

H. Abrahamian and S. Mesic also discussed a number of issues regarding cooperation between Armenia and Croatia at international organizations.

2. SERZH SARGSYAN: ARMENIA HAS NOT TOUGHENED ITS POSITIONS IN NEGOTIATIONS ON NAGORNO KARABAKH PROBLEM [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

The May 22 tete-a-tete conversation between the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan and the President of Croatia Stjepan Mesic, who is on an official visit to Yerevan, was followed by an enlarged meeting of the official delegations of the two countries. The agreements on cooperation in the spheres of culture, education and science and on avoidance of double taxation of incomes and property and prevention of tax evasion were signed.

Then a joint press conference of the Armenian and Croatian presidents took place.

S. Sargsyan stated that Armenia attaches importance to further development of relations with Croatia in the political, economic and cultural spheres. Armenia considers the development of its cooperation with Croatia as important also in the sense that Croatia is a country - candidate for membership of the European Union, while Armenia is involved in initiatives on cooperation with EU structures.

S. Mesic said that this is the first visit of the Croatian president so the negotiations have, in some sense, a character of becoming acquainted with each other. According to him, Armenia is among those countries, with which Croatia can promote cooperation on the basis of mutual interests. The matter concerns first of all economic cooperation.

S. Sargsyan stated that Armenia has not toughened its positions in negotiations with Azerbaijan on settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. He explained that the pivotal issue of settlement is status of Nagorno Karabakh.

S. Sargsyan underlined once again that the process of regulating Armenian-Turkish relations and that of the Karabakh conflict's settlement are quite different and separate processes. In his words, solution of difficult problems requires great efforts, and for passing this difficult path, there will be optimists and pessimists in Armenia, Turkey and other countries. "Just as at the beginning I was not inspired very much by statements of optimists, now I am not displeased or disappointed either by statements of pessimists," S. Sargsyan noted. According to him, Turkey still keeps the opportunity to persuade the international community that it is a modern country and is guided by current standards and international law principles.

S. Mesic said that the problems of settling the Karabakh conflict and regulating the Armenian-Turkish relations should be solved only through negotiations. "It is better to conduct negotiations during 10 years than to wage a war during 10 days," he said.

3. ARMENIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS POINTS TO VIOLATIONS COMMITTED BEFORE ELECTIONS [Aravot, 05/25/09]

During the election campaign of Yerevan Council of Elders elections the Armenian National Congress has recorded a number of gross violations, the authors of which are the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), the Administrative Court of Armenia, and the RA Defence Ministry. ANC Spokesperson Arman Musinian reported at the May 25 press conference. He said that CEC without any



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explanation refused to discuss opposition representative's proposal to put a stamp in voters' passports and then made a decision to exclude stamps in passports.

Reminding that voters' passports were sealed during the 2008 presidential elections, A. Musinian said that thus the possibility of rigging, in particular, repeated voting by one person, was limited to some extent.

According to the ANC Spokesperson, the Administrative Court groundlessly refused to accept for examination opposition's application that regards the fact that a smaller number of women are represented in RPA and other pro-governmental parties' proportional lists than it is established by the law. It should be mentioned that according to the law, 15% candidates on the lists should be women, while, according to A. Musinian, the above mentioned parties did not ensure that requirement of the law.

The ANC Spokesperson said that in order to falsify the elections the authorities are going to use not only the criminal forces, but also the army and the Police. According to him, the Defence Ministry Spokesperson in essence confirmed that documents on involving the army in the elections are circulated in the armed forces. According to A. Musinian, in that connection ANC has already applied to the Prosecutor General's Office.

4. ANC SPOKESPERSON: RPA IS NO LONGER ABLE TO OVERCOME MINIMUM BARRIER IN ELECTIONS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

If the authorities commit falsifications on the day of Yerevan Council of Elders elections, the opposition will be able to fight them, but it will be difficult to fight if unbridled and violent actions are done. Armenian National Congress (ANC) Spokesperson Arman Musinian expressed such an opinion at the May 25 press conference. "If a group of 50 people consisting of National Security Service employees, special detachments representatives, district authoritative persons, skin-heads enter a polling station and if they destroy and smash everything, beat proxies, it will not be easy either for us or for them," the Spokesperson said.

Estimating ANC's rating, A. Musinian said that the bloc enjoys 60-65% sympathy of voters and if fair elections are held, the Congress will have a prevailing majority in Yerevan Council of Elders.

According to his formulation, if the elections are rigged, the pro-governmental forces will form "as untidy coalition" as the current ruling coalition. A. Musinian said that while ANC is holding crowded and active electoral rallies, criminal retributions take place inside the coalition.

Touching upon ARFD, the ANC Spokesperson said that Congress has not seen a step by ARFD yet that would prove the latter's being opposition. As to the Republican Party of Armenia, according to A. Musinian's estimation, "that party is no longer able to overcome elections minimum barrier." In his words, the Bargavach Hayastan (Prosperous Armenia) party has a bit bigger chance to succeed and the Orinats Yerkir (Country of Law) "is a non-serious subject."

5. ACCORDING TO LEVON TER-PETROSIAN, RELEASING THOSE ARRESTED ON CASE OF MARCH 1 INCIDENTS IS A MATTER OF WEEKS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

"Release of political prisoners is already a matter of weeks," first RA President Levon Ter-Petrosian stated at the March 24 preelection meeting. According to him, if the people manifest themselves correctly, the political prisoners will be free very soon, the day following Yerevan Council of Elders elections. However, as L. Ter-Petrosian added, they will be released under any election results. In his words, PACE Co-rapporteurs feel deceived, because though the Armenian authorities made some amendments to the Criminal Code, the political prisoners remained in prisons.

L. Ter-Petrosian applied to oligarchs calling them for not hindering the Armenian National Congress to win Yerevan Council of Elders elections. "All the same, the people will win and you will be punished: don't act so to be eternally damned by people," he said.

6. RPA PLANS TO CREATE NEW JOBS AND ARFD TO PROVIDE DISABLED WITH JOBS BY THEIR PREELECTION PROGRAMS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

The Republican Party of Armenia (RPA) preelection program's part Yerevan a City of Work mentions that if the party wins the elections it will keep the problem of population's employment in the focus of its attention. "City development programs will contribute to creation of new jobs for Yerevan residents, ensuring civilized working conditions," the RPA program mentioned.

In order to make Yerevan a city of work RPA plans to work out and implement programs with government's assistance that will be aimed at creation of new jobs, ensuring work of enterprises under



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communal jurisdiction in the whole capacity. Besides, the party plans to create favorable conditions for development of small and medium-sized business and for making Yerevan a more attractive city for investments.

ARFD electoral program's provisions also mention the necessity of implementing active employment programs. "Programs of making disabled people full members of community will be paid special attention," the ARFD program mentioned. ARFD promises through privileges and financial assistance to encourage employers that will provide disabled people with a job.

7. SHAVARSH KOCHARIAN POSITIVELY ASSESSES ARMENIAN-GEORGIAN ACTIVE AND REGULAR POLITICAL DIALOGUE [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

RA Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharian, on May 25, met with Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister David Jalaghania, who heads the working group that arrived in Yerevan to carry on negotiations on Armenian-Georgian border's demarcation. S. Kocharian positively assessed Armenian-Georgian active and regular political dialogue and mentioned that it is a firm basis for deepening mutually beneficial relations.

According to the RA Foreign Ministry Press and Information Department, the Deputy Ministers had a detailed conversation on further development of bilateral political, economic, and cultural cooperation, discussed issues regarding Armenian-Georgian border's demarcation.

8. NKR PRESIDENT ATTACHES IMPORTANCE TO DIASPORA'S ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS IN ARTSAKH [Hayastani Hanrapetutian, 05/25/09]

NKR President Bako Sahakian received French Armenian benefactor Karpis Nikoghosian on May 22. According to the NKR President's Press Office, a number of issues regarding programs implemented in Artsakh and its socio-economic development were discussed at the meeting. A special importance was paid to spheres of education, culture, and sport. Bako Sahakian attached importance to Diaspora's role in implementation of various programs in Artsakh.

9. AMBASSADOR OF NORWAY HANDS COPY OF HIS CREDENTIALS TO RA FOREIGN MINISTER [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

On May 25, RA Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian received newly appointed Ambassador of Norway to RA Mr. Knut Houg (residence Moscow) on the occasion of the ceremony of handing the copy of Ambassador's credentials. E. Nalbandian expressed the hope that new Ambassador's appointment will contribute to expansion of cooperation in bilateral and many-sided formats. He said that Armenia is interested in development and deepening of political and economic relations with Norway.

According to the report of the RA Foreign Ministry Press and Information Department, the interlocutors attached importance to activation of mutual visits between the two countries, further development of trade and economic, educational, and cultural relations. E. Nalbandian and K. Houg also touched upon a number of regional and international problems.

10. ARMENIA IS INTERESTED IN DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS WITH NORWAY IN BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL FORMATS [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

Newly appointed Ambassador of Norway to Armenia Knut Houg (residence in Moscow) handed today his credentials to the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan.

Presidential Press office told Armenpress that congratulating the diplomat on the post assumption President Sargsyan said that Armenia is interested in the development and enhancement of relations with Norway in bilateral and multilateral formats.

According to S. Sargsyan, the Armenian people have greatly formed their idea on Norway based on the high mission of great humanist Frityof Nansen. At the same time the President said that in our state with gratification remember and highly assess the support of Norwegian people to the restoration of disaster zone after the 1988 earthquake.

"There is the Norwegian village today in Armenia which permanently reminds us of this great support and aid," Serzh Sargsyan underscored.

The Ambassador said that Norway also stresses the importance of development of multilateral relations with Armenia and is ready to undertake practical steps towards it.



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President Sargsyan and Ambassador Houg stressed the importance of efficient usage of the potential of the two states, further development of political, economic and cultural relations and establishment of legal-agreement field necessary for the cooperation. The newly appointed diplomat assured that he will do his best to foster the cooperation between the two states.

The interlocutors have also exchanged thoughts on the regional issues. Ambassador Houg said that in the Nagorno Karabakh conflict regulation Norway supports the OSCE Minsk Group efforts and finds that exceptionally through peaceful way and balanced negotiation process it is possible to reach peace.

President Sargsyan highly assessed the Norwegian balanced attitude towards the issues of our region in different international institutions.

11. ACCORDING TO DPA CHAIRMAN, KARABAKH'S RETURN TO NEGOTIATIONS TABLE IS UNEQUIVOCALLY NECESSARY [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

In 2008 Armenia pinned its hopes on "football diplomacy," as it was a new approach to Armenian-Turkish relations. As Democratic Party of Armenia (DPA) Chairman Aram G. Sargsian said at the May 26 press conference, "football diplomacy" was also necessary for Turkey for some time for the European Union to weaken its pressure on that country. And when the President of France declared inadmissibility of involving Turkey in EU, the Turks changed their tactics to Armenia and put forward preconditions on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

"The preconditions should have been put forward from the very start for everybody to understand what question and demand one side has to another," A. Sargsian said. According to him, in any case, it would be clear what the Armenians want, what the Turks are against. The DPA Chairman also said that Armenia should have proposed Turkey implementing joint programs in various spheres, as well as creating a free economic zone. Maybe those proposals would not be carried out, however, according to A. Sargsian, the world would see that Armenia strives for improving its relations with Turkey.

The DPA Chairman also touched upon the Nagorno Karabakh negotiations saying that neither Madrid nor Key West principles are acceptable for the Armenian side. According to A. Sargsian, if the Armenians agree to the proposal of holding a referendum in Karabakh in some time, the whole way Artsakh passed will be annihilated by that. In his conviction, today it is unequivocally necessary to return Karabakh to the negotiations table. As to the forthcoming meeting of the RA and Azeri Presidents, according to A. Sargsian's prediction, it will not differ from the previous meetings.

12. NIG APARAN STANDS NOT NEAR AUTHORITIES BUT NEAR STATEHOOD, UNION VICE-CHAIRMAN SAYS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

The Nig Aparan Compatriotic Union will organize a series of festive events on May 28 in Aparan on the occasion of the anniversary of Armenia's victory in Bash-Aparan battle. Union Vice-Chairman Tigran Petrosiants reported at the May 26 press conference. On that day the Union will free of charge move to Aparan everybody who will wish. Busts of Sedrak Jalalian and Drastamat Kanayan will be placed there and a "traditional Armenian entertainment" will take place in the evening.

T. Petrosiants said that in general May is a month of victories for the Armenian people: he reminded the success in 1918 in Sardarapat and in Bash-Aparan, as well as Shoushi liberation in 1991. According to him, if suddenly a danger of war emerges today, the Armenians irrespective of their party belonging will join those defending the homeland.

T. Petrosiants confirmed that Nig Aparan supports the Republican Party of Armenia in Yerevan Council of Elders elections. "From the moment of establishment our Union has been standing not near the authorities but near the statehood, under Levon Ter-Petrosian, Robert Kocharian, and Serzh Sargsyan," he said. According to T. Petrosiants, for each country the best achievement is existence of a democratic system of values, but no democracy can be built unless the people is ready for it. "We are still at an unfinished war, we still need a strong hand, a strong person," he said.

13. ANAHIT BAKHSHIAN EXPECTS RA PRESIDENT TO RESTORE NORMAL ACTIVITY OF FACT-FINDING GROUP FORMED BY HIS ORDER [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

Zharangutiun (Heritage) party Board Chairwoman Anahit Bakhshian sent a letter to RA President Serzh Sargsyan on May 26 drawing his attention to the fact that fact-finding group's activities in essence have been frozen from May 4. Group head Vahe Stepanian took leave, which, according to A. Bakhshian, is not envisaged by RA President's 2008 October 23 Order. Returning from leave on May 25, V.



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Stepanian unexpectedly declared that he is resigning. And the whole documents base, according to Zharangutiun Board Chairwoman, is kept in the locked safe under his control.

"Undergoing various pressures and overcoming many obstacles during its seven months' activity the fact-finding group nevertheless introduced essential facts to the NA Ad-hoc Committee on Events Occurred on 1-2 March and Their Reasons, in accordance with the provisions of the RA President's 2008 October 23 Order, which also proceed from the requirements of PACE Resolution N 1643. We expect restoration of activity of the fact-finding group formed by your order," A. Bakhshian's letter read.

14. ACCORDING TO ARMEN RUSTAMIAN, SOME STILL CONSIDER ELECTIONS BUSINESS IN ARMENIA [Aravot, 05/26/09]

Elections already becoming annual in Armenia call forth more questions than answers. To all appearances, Yerevan Council of Elders elections scheduled for May 31 will not be an exception, either. ARFD Supreme Body representative, RA NA deputy Armen Rustamian said at the May 26 meeting with journalists.

He said that Dashnaktsutiun has already received reports on some violations. In particular, according to rumors, all term servicemen being Yerevan residents are promised a leave provided that they should vote for the respective list. Voter buying is also spoken about, at that, various sums are mentioned. According to A. Rustamian, some consider elections a business in Armenia and try to gain as much money as possible in that process. It is not accidental that brawls start before any election when those financing elections try to find out why they received less votes than envisaged for the funds they spent.

A. Rustamian said that like in previous elections, no disputes between competitor parties' candidates take place. While Yerevan government system need to be changed, and the way of passing from the old to new could have been the main subject of dispute between forces running for the elections.

According to A. Rustamian, before elections Dashnaktsutiun has always called for fighting violations with joint forces, even has proposed establishing a united headquarters on informing about falsifications. However, it is difficult to come to an agreement on some issues between Armenia's political forces, and this time Dashnaktsutiun will try to solve the issue on its own: ARFD will have 2-3 representatives, a commission member and proxies, in all 439 Yerevan polling stations. ARFD is going to involve its resources from the whole country for that purpose.

15. ARFD CANDIDATE: YEREVAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE NATIONAL AND OPPOSITION [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

The body governing Yerevan should be national. RA NA deputy Artsvik Minasian heading the ARFD electoral roll in Yerevan Council of Elders elections gave assurance at the May 26 press conference. Attaching importance to the circumstance that the Mayor should be an opposition representative, he said that in that case Yerevan administration can be a counterbalance and a restraining force for the central authorities.

Mayor's candidate also attached importance to establishment of an individual institution of Yerevan Ombudsman. He said that currently the most part of complaints received by Ombudsman's Office is from Yerevan, and it would be right if the capital city had its Ombudsman. In A. Minasian's conviction, Yerevan Mayor should be a person devoted to the idea of human freedoms and rights, as well as should have a resolution to fight corruption and protectionism.

Saying that he has invited for a dispute people heading RPA, BH, ANC electoral rolls for several times, A. Minasian expressed an opinion that their rejecting the invitation is insulting not only for him, but also for the public. He said that the National Press Club has also made an attempt to organize such a dispute, but that attempt also failed. A. Minasian once more invited his rivals for a dispute before the elections.

16. CURRENT POTENTIAL PERMITS TO DEVELOP ARMENIAN-NORWEGIAN BILATERAL ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RELATIONS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

The Armenian people are grateful for Norway for the humanitarian aid provided after the 1988 destructive earthquake. RA NA Speaker Hovik Abrahamian stated on May 26, receiving newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Norway to Armenia Knut Houg (residence Moscow).

Mentioning Fridtjof Nansen's contribution to protection of rights of Armenian refugees deprived of their homeland after the 1915 Armenian Genocide, the interlocutors agreed that Armenian-Norwegian



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friendly relations have a rich history. The sides held the same opinion that the current potential permits to develop bilateral economic and cultural contacts.

According to the report of the RA NA Public Relations Department, during the talk they touched upon regional security and cooperation between Armenia and Norway at international organizations.

17. AMBASSADOR OF BENIN HANDS COPY OF HIS CREDENTIALS TO RA FOREIGN MINISTER [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

On May 26, RA Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian received newly appointed Ambassador of Benin to RA Ayi Visinto d'Almeida (residence Moscow) on the occasion of the ceremony of handing the copy of credentials. The Minister expressed the hope that the accreditation of the first Ambassador of Benin will contribute to development of bilateral contacts.

The Ambassador, in his turn, stated that Benin is interested in establishment of cooperation with Armenia in various spheres, and his appointment is the evidence of that wish.

According to the RA Foreign Ministry Press and Information Department, during the talk both sides attached importance to deepening of cooperation between Armenia and Benin within the framework of international organizations, especially UN, as well as the International Organization of Francophonie.

18. DO TURKISH GENERALS STAND BEHIND TAYYIP ERDOGAN'S STATEMENT "BORDER WITH ARMENIA WILL NOT BE OPENED WITHOUT NAGORNO KARABAKH SETTLEMENT"? [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

The latest developments in the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey had called forth just a hysteria in Azerbaijan. And only after Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan made a statement a few days ago that "Turkey will open the border with Armenia if only the Armenian side stops the occupation of Azeri territories" the Turkish-Azeri strained relations as if discharged to some extent.

Turkish press touching upon such a development of events, reports that country's army had a direct influence on this statement of Erdogan.

The Sabah daily reports that before leaving for Baku Erdogan participated in National Security Council's sitting where the generals made him understand that they "cannot lose Azerbaijan."

"We wish the process launched between Turkey and Armenia to continue. However, we cannot lose Azerbaijan," Turkish generals stated.

19. SESSION OF "ARMENIAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCY" HELD IN THE ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

Today the session of "Armenian Development Agency" took place in the Armenian Government chaired by the head of the Council, Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan.

Public relations department of Armenian Government told Armenpress that presenting the 2009 quarterly report of the agency, the chief executive director Robert Harutyunian also reported on the implementation of the assignments of the previous session and noted that in the 2009 plan agenda their aims, expected results and responsible people for implementation are definitely mentioned.

The Council has discussed the plan of actions towards promotion of the export of products and researches of new markets with which it is intended to assist the enterprises having an export potential in assessment of opportunities of drafting of new projects as well as conduct study of demands of external markets to make the local products more compatible in the external markets.

During the session issues connected with 2009 working plan of "Armenian Development Agency", standards of assessment of agency activity as well as the support to the improvement and development of Armenian IT sphere have also been discussed.

Issues connected with the procedure of organization of "ArmTech" annual IT forum, organization works of "Shanghai Expo-2010" world exhibition as well as the activity of ADA have also been discussed.

The Council has approved the annual report of "Armenian Development Agency".



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20. ARMENIAN PRESIDENT APPOINTS V. CHITECHIAN AND A. ADONTS AMBASSADORS OF ARMENIA CORRESPONDINGLY TO FRANCE AND BELGIUM [Hayastani Hanrapetutium, 05/27/09]

On May 26 the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan signed a decree dismissing Vigen Chitechian from the office of Ambassador of Armenia to Belgium and at the same time from the Head of Armenian representation in the European Union.

Presidential Press office told Armenpress that with another decree of the President Vigen Chitechian has been appointed Ambassador of Armenia to France (residence in Paris).

On May 26 the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan signed a decree appointing Avet Adonts Ambassador of Armenia to Belgium (residence in Brussels).

According to the May 27 decree of Armenian President the Ambassador of Armenia to Belgium Avet Adonts has been simultaneously appointed Head of the Armenian Representation in EU (residence in Brussels).

21. HOT LINE TO FUNCTION IN THE GOVERNMENT [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

Armenian governmental press service reported that from June 1 a “hot line” will function in the staff of the Armenian government for increasing the efficiency and transparency of the discussion of applications-complaints of the citizens. The phone number of the hot-line is 527000 and the e-mail hotline@gov.am.

22. NKR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE PARTICIPATED IN A CONFERENCE IN MARSEILLES [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

A conference called “International Law in the Context of Political Realities in the South Caucasus Conflicts” took place on May 25 in the Paul Sezan University in the French city of Marseilles.

NKR MFA Press Service told Armenpress that the conference was organized by the Marseilles Bureau of the Committee on Coordination of Armenian Organizations of France (CCAF).

Deputy of the French National Assembly, Vice-Mayor of Marseilles Roland Bloom, NA Deputy Sylvie Andrion, CCAF Chairman Pascal Shamasian, representatives of the local self-government bodies, lecturers and students of the University, organizations’ leaders and members of the Armenian community, as well as journalists participated in the conference.

NKR Permanent Representative to France Hovik Gevorgyan introduced the sources and grounds of the Karabakh conflict. He noted the impossibility of resolving the conflict in a military way and emphasized the significance of international law in the process of the Azerbaijani-Karabakh and similar conflicts settlement.

The Permanent Representative noted that recognition of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic by the international community was a guarantee of final peace and stability in the region.

23. “REPORT ON THE DISCIPLINARY POLICY IN THE ARMENIAN ARMY” PRESENTED [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

Serviceman is a person who is under the protection of the state the rights, freedom and legal interests of which must be respected and people who have violated them – punished said the charge d'affaires of the OSCE Yerevan Office Carel Hofstra during the presentation of the “Report on human rights protection and disciplinary policy in the armed forces of Armenia”.

According to him respect for the rule of law and civil oversight over human rights protection in the armed forces are fundamental in a democratic society. C. Hofstra said that the sphere is comparatively less studied and there are still tasks to do in this direction. He noted that everything should be done so that the punitive measures applied to the law violators correspond to the international standards.

The report aims at ensuring the disciplinary offences, which very often cause human rights violation, are uncovered.

According to Armenian Human Rights Defender Armen Harutyunian the Armed Forces are the mirror of the society and all the positive and negative phenomena are in different formats reflected there.

“There are numerous issues but our aim is not to point to only the negative phenomena: the existing forces are necessary to be combined and on general efforts the solutions found.

From this standpoint I welcome the readiness of Armenian Defense Ministry to cooperate with us,” A. Harutyunian said.



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He stressed that everything should be done to ensure that the ordinary citizen feels protected and the confidence towards the Armed Forces increases.

A. Harutyunian will present the report to the Armenian Government for further discussion with the Defense Ministry. He stressed the importance of works with different organizations noting that only in this case it will be possible to achieve a desired result.

The study was carried out as part of cooperation between the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the Ombudsman's Office.

BUSINESS

24. ARMENIAN GDP DECLINES 9.7% IN JANUARY-APRIL 2009 ON SAME PERIOD OF LAST YEAR [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

Armenia's GDP declined by 9.7% in January-April 2009 on the same period of 2008 and amounted to 638bn 939m drams (more than 1bn 894.4m USD as calculated at the average exchange rate of 337.72 drams against a dollar in January-April). The index-deflator of GDP made 101.8%.

According to data of the RA National Statistical Service, industrial production of Armenia declined by 11.1% in January-April 2009 on the same months of last year and made 176bn 967.6m drams.

Gross agricultural output fell by 4.1% to 57bn 28.4m drams, construction declined by 42.4% to 51bn 508.5m drams, retail trade grew by 2.5% to 262bn 210.5m drams, and services declined by 0.6% to 261bn 733m drams.

The foreign trade of Armenia fell by 30% to 1bn 69.1m USD in January-April 2009 on the same period of last year and amounted to 1bn 69.1m USD, with exports declining by 47.8% to 175.6m USD and imports declining by 25% to 893.5m USD.

Consumer prices increased by 2.3%, industrial production prices fell by 5.9% in January-April 2009 on the same months of 2008.

The number of officially registered unemployed grew by 6.5% in late April 2009 as compared with the same month of last year and made 81.2 thousand.

The average monthly nominal salary made 96,875 drams in January-April 2009 (13.2% growth on the same months of 2008), including 80,937 drams in the state sector (17.9% growth) and 120,427 drams in the non-state sector (7.4% growth). The average exchange rate of a US dollar made 337.27 drams in January-April 2009.

25. TURKISH BUSINESSMEN MAY ACQUIRE ARMENIAN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT'S SHARES, BUT TURKISH COMPANIES NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN ITS CONSTRUCTION [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

At the May 19 sitting, the National Security Council of the RA heard the RA Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Armen Movsisian's report on the current stage of the program on construction of a new nuclear power unit in Armenia, discussed the steps taken in this direction until now and approved these steps. As the minister said at the RA National Assembly on May 20, by the government's decision, an Australian company's U.S. subsidiary has been selected the contractor of the power unit's construction, and it will select companies to do construction work, control the operation and the training of employees, etc. 13 companies submitted bids for participation in the tender, and competition went between two of them.

In response to the concern expressed by member of "ARF" faction Ara Nranian that for political reasons the construction of the power plant's new unit may also be entrusted to a Turkish construction organization (among others), the minister said that there is no Turkish company doing construction of nuclear power units. It is quite another matter that there are no restrictions on investment making, and Turkish companies may also acquire a certain number of the power plant's shares. A. Movsisian underlined that regardless of who will be the owners, the nuclear power plant will be operated under Armenian laws and international agreements.

26. DISCUSSIONS HELD FOR ESTABLISHING ARMENIAN-BELGIAN JOINT VENTURE [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

The goal of the Armenian-Belgian business forum held in Yerevan May 25-26 is promotion of trade turnover between the two countries and creation of joint venture. General director of the Belgium's Valonia province's Foreign Trade and Investments Agency Filip Syunen said today at a press conference



that during these days Belgian businessmen get acquainted with their Armenian partners, trying to find cooperation edges. The issue on opening Armenian-Belgian joint venture in Armenia is also being discussed.

F. Syunen noted that Belgium can be a good partner for Armenia, assist to the stabilization of Armenian market in the condition of financial-economic crisis.

"The more we speak about crisis, the more its negative impact is notable, the director said. Belgium has special anti-crisis program with which it supports private companies. According to him, in the end of this year the crisis will slow down and the economies will start restoring slowly.

27. CONTRACT TO BE SIGNED WITH THE WINNER OF TENDER OF CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW NUCLEAR UNIT IN ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

Negotiations with the "Worley Parsons" international consortium, which was recognized a winner and must coordinate the construction works of the new nuclear unit of the Nuclear station in Armenia, continue.

In response to the question of Armenpress the Deputy Armenian Energy and Natural Resources Minister Areg Galstyan told journalists that the winner consortium consists of Australian, American, Bulgarian and European daughter enterprises.

"If we find general interests over this contract it will already be signed in the nearest future and we will start the long lasting process by the end of construction of the unit and its exploitation. The winner company will assist as a company which coordinates the whole process as well as will conduct negotiations with investors and contractors. These are quite serious functions and we hope these negotiations will be successfully wrapped up," A. Galstyan said.

He considered it early to speak from which state the financial means of construction of the nuclear unit will be involved. Before making any definite statements about the investors yet the technical-economic grounding works of the construction and assessments of its possible impact on the environment must be brought to an end.

After that or in parallel to that negotiations will be held with possible investors.

"We hope that our Russian, American and European partners will work with us as co-investors," he said.

Referring to the construction of Iran-Armenia oil pipeline A. Galstyan said that the negotiations with the Iranian partners over economic, financial and technical issues still continue.

28. SMALL-TO-MEDIUM BUSINESS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED TO RESIST ECONOMIC CRISIS, SAYS ABEL AGHANBEGYAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

On the initiative of Policy Forum Armenia, an economic forum started at the American University of Armenia on May 25 with a goal to discuss the impact of the world economic and financial crisis and find ways to mitigate its consequences.

The Economic Forum brought together representatives of international organizations, major policymakers from regional economic powerhouses, Armenia's key economic policymakers since independence. Titled "Armenia: Weathering the Global Storm", the economic forum served as a major venue for discussing the global and Armenia-specific trends and culminated in a panel session where Armenia's successive Prime Ministers discussed policy options for the future.

As Abel Aghanbегyan said during the television bridge at the opening of the conference, it is not clear when the global financial crisis ends. Apparently, many will be able to get stronger while overcoming the crisis.

According to A. Aghanbегyan, in order to withstand the crisis CIS countries should develop small and medium business, which will enable to create new jobs and revive the economy. "We will not come out of this recession soon," stressed the academician adding that it is important to remain optimistic and at the same time be ready to the worst.

29. SERGEI ALEKSASHENKO: DEVALUATION OF NATIONAL CURRENCIES OF ARMENIA AND RUSSIA IS A LESSON FOR TWO COUNTRIES [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

The current world financial and economic crisis is the first global recession, and no country can escape its impact, told Sergei Aleksashenko, former First Deputy Chairman of Russia's Central Bank at the "Armenia: Weathering the Global Storm" economic forum kicked off on May 25 in Yerevan.



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International financial organizations and most economists predict a deep and lengthy recession for a wide range of developed and developing countries. As many of these states, Armenia will face the consequences of adverse global trends, and in some ways is likely to be even more affected owing to a dramatic economic slowdown in some of its main trading partner countries.

According to Sergei Aleksashenko, similar crisis occurs from time to time and result in elimination of weakest enterprises. "Governments should prepare for next crisis and the resources of the Central Bank should be used to resist it. In this respect the U.S. is in better condition than Armenia and Russia," Sergei Aleksashenko said.

According to him, devaluation of the national currencies of Armenia and Russia during global crisis by 20 to 40 per cent was a bitter lesson for both countries, in any country fluctuation of exchange rate is not used as economic policy tool. Sergei Aleksashenko called on Armenian and Russian authorities to implement a policy aimed at strengthening national currency.

Besides, in S. Aleksashenko's opinion, institutional reforms should be among main directions of governments of CIS countries. Although the peak of recession has passed but the economy will be still retarded by slowdown of anti-crisis and anti-corruption measures.

According to S. Aleksashenko over the first quarter of 2009 Russian economy experienced 10 per cent drop, which is the highest rate among 20 world powers. This highest decline was conditioned by the dependency of Russia on the world raw material markets and oil prices. In early 2008 the drop in demand for metals, products of chemical industry resulted in the decline of Russia's economy. In 2008 investments reduced, since after Russian-Georgian war investors started to take out their investments from Russia.

30. USD 30 MILLION OUT OF HALF BILLION TO BE ALLOCATED TO ARMENIA'S SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

USD 30 million out of half billion of Russia's loan will be directed to support the small-to-medium business development in Armenia. In particular, that amount will be provided to the National Center of Small and Medium entrepreneurship development, which will carry out crediting of businesses, RA prime minister Tigran Sargsyan told a recent sitting of the government.

According to him, resources will be also directed to hypothec fund. "We hope these measures will mitigate the negative impact of the global financial crisis," prime minister stated.

To credit small and medium business about AMD 15 billion (USD 50 million) was allocated to the Armenian German Fund operating at the RA Central Bank in 2008, and USD 50 million was provided by the World Bank.

31. ILLEGAL TRANSPORTATION OF GREAT AMOUNT OF BANK CARDS FROM USA TO ARMENIA PREVENTED [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

The officials of Department of fighting against contraband and double customs oversight of Government affiliated State Revenue Committee have lately prevented the import of 100 bank cards to Armenia in the cargo complex of "Zvartnots" airport.

Public relations department of State Revenue Committee told Armenpress that the cards were discovered during the customs checking of the parcel sent from the USA and was addressed to the resident of Yerevan 20 year-old Lusine Shahazizian.

To keep them back from the customs oversight they were fixed to the pages of newspapers which were sent in the parcel. Based on the operative information the contraband bank cards have been confiscated shortly after L. Shahazizian got the parcel.

It has been found out that the cards belonging to "American Express", "Capital One", "CITIBANK", "CHASE" and other American authoritative banks are false. "Visa" and "Master" as well as "Gold and Platinum" cards existed.

Materials on the case have been sent to the National Security Service. A criminal case has been evoked on the article 203 "Preparation or realization of false payment documents" of Armenian Criminal Code.

According to it preparation, or realization of false payment cards is punished by imprisonment.



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DIASPORA

32. D. MIGO SAYS NO ONE CAN BE PLEASED WITH A SITUATION WHEN IT IS ALLOWED IN A PERFECTLY UNPUNISHED WAY TO DENY THE GENOCIDE [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

"I consider the adoption of the bill condemning the denial of the Armenian Genocide by the French Senate necessary as from the moment when the Genocide is recognized no one can be pleased with a situation when it is allowed in a perfectly unpunished way to deny the Genocide," head of the Commission of Finances of French Parliament, author of bill adopted by the Parliament in autumn 2006 which condemns the denial of Armenian Genocide, socialist MP Didier Migon said to "Azad" periodical which is published by the Grenoble Armenian Community.

Referring to the postponing the discussion of the bill by the Senate D. Migon noted that the Government was against the discussion of the bill.

"The only way to involve the issue in the agenda is that Senate initiates to involve it, but whether the Senate will wish to initiate such a thing," the socialist MP expressed doubt. At the same time he noted that in case the committed Genocide is denied, each person can feel offended.

Presenting the position of French socialistic party in the issue of Turkey's EU membership the MP said that the Turkish possible membership to the EU must be preceded by the recognition of the fact of Armenian Genocide by this state.

33. NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST CALLS NANCY PELOSI FOR SUPPORTING ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION ON ARMENIAN GENOCIDE [Azg, 05/25/09]

The National Council of the Churches of Christ of the USA sent a letter to Speaker of U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi calling her for doing an additional work in the direction of including in the agenda Resolution N 252 on Armenian Genocide and ensuring its ratification.

Doctor Michael Kinnamon, the Secretary General of the above mentioned organization representing more than 100 thousand churches and having 45 million followers in his letter to N. Pelosi wrote that for real improvement of relations between Armenia and Turkey the U.S. executive and legislative powers should use "the convenient word determined by the international law, genocide" when speaking about the slaughters of 1915.

ANCA reported that Archbishop Vazgen Aykazian, the Chairman of the National Council of the Churches of Christ established in 1950 also expressed disappointment that the U.S. President did not exactly characterize the fact of Armenian Genocide and added that half of his family died in that tragedy.

ARTS

34. ON OCCASION OF 85TH BIRTHDAY OF CHARLES AZNAVOUR [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/25/09]

The world-famous Armenian-French singer, composer, poet and actor and all this is about the same man - Charles Aznavour who celebrates his 85th birthday in Morter Homeland on May 22nd. Aznavour wrote his first song "I Am Drunk" in remote 1944. He composed more than a thousand songs, the most famous ones being, in particular, "The Drums of Love", "La Mamma", "This is the End", "Alleluia", "Give Us Today" and others. He won international recognition as a singer after a successful performance at Olimpia concert hall in Paris in 1959.

C. Aznavour's voice is considered "the most important vocal reality of new times". The roles he played in films did not go unnoticed either: in 1959 he won a "Crystal Star" award for his role in the film "Head Against the Wall", while in 1961 he received "The Best Actor of France" award. His roles in such films as "Shoot the Pianist" and "The Passing of the Rhine" (1960), "Taxi For Tobrouk" and "The Devil and the Ten Commandments" (1961) are also worth mentioning.

After the destructive 1988 Spitak earthquake, Aznavour wrote jointly with Tiran Garvarentz the song "Pour toi Armenie" ("For You, Armenia") which was performed by a group of famous singers from various countries and aroused international compassion for the terrible tragedy of our small country. Following that, the great singer started active charitable activity in the homeland of his ancestors.

The Decree of May 5th, 2009 opened a new - diplomatic page in Aznavour's biography: by the decree of Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, Charles Aznavour is Armenia's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Switzerland, he is also Permanent Representative of Armenia to international organizations in Geneva.



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Aznavour enjoys general love of his compatriots in Armenia, the Diaspora and Artsakh - it is no accident that a square was named after the chansonnier in Yerevan, the capital of All Armenians, and his house-museum will open here in the autumn. A bronze statue of the singer was erected in Gyumri.

A series of concerts "For You, Armenia" took place in Stepanakert and Artsakh on May 17-22. The final concert will be given in Gyumri on the birthday of the singer.

Born in 1924, to a family of Armenians who immigrated from Javakhk to France, Charles Aznavourian (Aznavour) is undoubtedly the most famous person out of the Armenians currently living in the world. People both in Armenia and France consider him as their own.

Aznavour is one of those few lucky persons whose greatness was acknowledged by mankind during their lifetime. When he turned 80, it was announced that he would no longer give concerts. Thank God, the reality is different, and we again have an opportunity to listen and see the Great Singer on the stage.

35. WITHIN THE FRAMEWORKS OF "NATIONAL GALLERY" INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL THE WORKS OF V. SHARAFIAN AND L. BILAVA TO SOUND MAY 29 IN YEREVAN [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

Within the frameworks of "National Gallery" international 5th music festival the works of composers Vache Sharafian and Liza Bilava will sound May 29 in the Armenian National Gallery.

An official from the festival organizer "Gallery of Arts" cultural foundation told Armenpress that during the concert violinists Karla Kihlsted, Colin Jacobsen, Karen Shahgeldian, viola players Maxim Novikov, violoncellist Aram Talalian will perform.

V. Sharafian is the author of a number of works intended for chamber, symphonic orchestras, ensembles and soloists. Works of the composer have been performed in Armenia, Israel, USA, France, Canada, Russia, Ukraine, Germany, Italy and other states.

Starting from 2001, as the official composer of "Silk Way" project, his "Morning scent of acacia" work for duduk and string quartet, as well as "The sun, wine and wind of time" – for duduk, violin, violoncello and piano have been performed by well known violinists Yo Yo Ma and "Silk Way" ensemble.

At first composer-vocalist L. Bilava played on violin and piano, dealt with singing and created at an early age. Moving to New York in 1990 he became an active participant of the local music life.

As a vocalist V. Sharafian with his own work took part in "America" and Sapporo (Japan) "Pacific music" festivals.

The "National Gallery" international music festival is held with the support of Armenian Culture Ministry and under the sponsorship of "VivaCell-MTS" company.

36. BULGARIAN CULTURAL PROJECT TO BE HELD IN ARMENIA MAY 29-JUNE 4 [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

Within the frameworks of year of Bulgarian culture in Armenia a cultural project will be conducted from May 29 – June 4 with the participation of well known groups of Bulgarian ethnic and classic art.

Head of the Public relations department of Armenian Culture Ministry Gayane Durgarian told Armenpress that during the project a photo exhibition "Temples and Sanctuaries of Bulgaria" will open, afterwards a gala-concert will take place in the National Academic Theatre after Al. Spendiarian dedicated to the year of Bulgarian culture in Armenia.

Events will also be organized in the Armenian provinces. The "Arabek" ballet group and "Sofia soloists" chamber orchestra will have concerts in the Dilijan culture house, Gyumri state dramatic theatre after V. Achemian and in the Yerevan state comedy theatre after H. Paronian.

The "Bistritsa grandmothers" ethnic ensemble and "Nayden Kirov" ethnic dance theatres will perform in the Vanadzor and Armavir culture houses.

The 2009 is announced a year a Bulgaria in Armenia and reciprocally in Bulgaria the 2010 will be celebrated as a year of Armenia. Within the frameworks of year of Bulgaria in Armenia days of Bulgarian films, exhibitions, great concert programs, opera performances and other cultural events are intended.

37. FINAL CONCERT OF "NATIONAL GALLERY" INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL TO BE FULL OF SURPRISES [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

The ceremonial closure of the "National Gallery" 5th international music festival will take place May 29 in the Armenian National Gallery. Founder of the festival Mariam Shahinyan told today reporters that the works of the composer Vache Sharafyan and American guitarist-vocalist Liza Bilava will sound



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during the final concert. M. Shahinyan assured that the concert is going to be interesting and full of surprises.

According to her, from year to year the festival attracts more and more people, which is the evidence of effective work and success, it inspires to applying new ideas.

V. Sharafyan assured that the festival will give a beginning to new collaborations, will be continuative and great concerts will be organized. According to him, Russian and American composers are very talented and unique.

L. Bilava said that Armenian and American music have much in common. Armenian audience is very warm and hospitable.

The participants also said that music does not recognize nationality and distance, it brings people together and helps to establish new contact levels.

"National Gallery" 5th international music festival kicked off April 22 with the support of Armenian Ministry of Culture and is sponsored by "VivaCell-MTS".

RELIGION

38. CATHOLICOS OF ALL ARMENIANS RECEIVES AMBASSADOR OF NORWAY [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II received today the newly appointed Norwegian Ambassador to Armenia Knut Hauge (residence in Moscow). The press office of Mother See informed Armenpress, that the Catholicos congratulated the ambassador on taking the office and expressed confidence, that it will give new impetus to the development of Armenian-Norwegian relations. The Catholicos expressed gratitude to the people of Norway for the support to Armenia in hard times of its history.

During the meeting they also referred to the current activity of Armenian Apostolic Church, the challenges it faces and inter-church relations.

SOCIAL

39. WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM OF SHIRAK PROVINCE BEING RECONSTRUCTED ON THE CREDIT PROGRAM OF KFW BANK [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

The water supply system of Shirak province is being reconstructed by credit means of German KfW bank. The project which covers overall around 10 years will be implemented in three rounds and aims at ensuring all the communities of the province with 24 hour-day water supply.

It guarantees the restoration of all the pressure zones. The calculation works of the project kicked off yet in 2002.

According to the first round, which has kicked off from April 1, the water supply of Gyumri, Akhurian, Maralik and Azatan is intended to be restored.

Responsible for the construction works of the project of restoration of water supply and sewerage net in Lori and Shirak Barbara Flitch told Armenpress that during 2009-2010 reconstruction works of water lines of Gyumri and Gyumri fed communities will be implemented which will continue by 2011.

The sewerage net will also be reconstructed. The project consultation and building oversight is being implemented by GITEK company.

"This is an international project and will be overseen according to international standards," B. Flitch noted.

The construction works in the province are conducted by the local "Dorozhnik" company.

The budget of only first 2009-2010 round of the project reaches 11.3 million Euros. During 2009 works of 5 million Euros will be conducted.

"The financial crisis will by no means affect the conduction of the works. On the whole there will be no financial issues," B. Flitch assured.

By the end of the year restoration works of Azatan, Akhurian and Maralik water nets as well as two Gyumri water pipelines will be finished.



40. ABOUT 600 MANUSCRIPTS OF MATENADARAN DIGITALIZED [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

About 600 manuscripts kept in Matenadaran – Institute of Ancient Manuscripts after M. Mashtots, have been digitalized. Director of Matenadaran Hrachya Tamrazyan told Armenpress that the results of digitalization process have exceeded the expectations due to the active work carried out in 2008.

“Digitalization of manuscripts requires a long-lasting work, but we implement it with great speed. The process is in its expansion phase, soon we will acquire new equipment and new workplaces will open. Manuscripts’ digitalization is a complex project, within the framework of which manuscripts description must be ensured”, H. Tamrazyan said. It is planned to accomplish digitalization and description works simultaneously in order to manage to have access to the net with complete data.

World economical crisis has affected neither the activity of Matenadaran nor the construction works of the new building. According to H. Tamrazyan, the philanthropists do not stop supporting and the construction works are carried out normally. If construction works are implemented at their greatest speed, the new department will be ready in 3 years. It is going to be 4 times larger than the present building of Matenadaran, the best conditions for the preservation of the manuscripts and the library fund will be ensured.

The building will be equipped with modern technologies, and will have scientific-educational center, modern reading-halls, as well as halls designed for scientific conferences. As for the visits to Matenadaran, H. Tamrazyan noted that this year they are more active. The average number of the visitors is 50,000-60,000 annually.

41. “NUCLEAR ENERGY AND ENERGY SECURITY” 4TH CONFERENCE KICKS OFF IN ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 05/26/09]

“Nuclear Energy and Energy Security” 4th conference kicked off today in Armenia within the frameworks of NATO’s “Science for Peace and Security” program. Representatives of 14 countries – Armenia, USA, Russia, Estonia, Georgia, Belgium, Japan, Croatia, Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Spain, Turkmenistan, Romania participate in the conference.

The leaders of the conference – representative of the Armenia’s “Progressive Science and Technology” center Samvel Apikyan and US “Brookhaven National Laboratory” member David Diamond noted that this conference is a new thing in the processes organized by NATO.

S. Apikyan said that the 21st century is a period of energy challenges. In the recent decades the usage of energy in the world essentially increased which once again shows that nuclear energy does not have alternative.

The increase of the usage of energy in the world Apikyan tied with several factors – development of global economy, unprecedented growth of the number of population, essential growth of the life quality. S. Apikyan underscored the organization of the conference, noting that it has serious importance for Armenia which in that respect has lack of resources.

According to D. Diamond, the usage of nuclear energy demands solution of a number of serious issues. Among them he singled out the relative high price, environment protection, non-dissemination of radioactive materials, solution of issue of wastes. In case of the solution of these issues the nuclear energy sphere will have unprecedented development.

D. Diamond noted that they also discuss the issue of construction of new nuclear unit in Armenia and a great attention will be paid to its accordance to international standards. According to D. Diamond, the ensuring of secure activity of the new unit demands systemic steps.

Armenian deputy energy and natural resources minister Areg Galstyan noted that after the energy crisis, Armenia has carried out a number of reforms in this sphere and now it has opportunities of exporting electricity. In a few days a contract will be signed with the winner company which will start the process of oversight of the construction of the new nuclear unit.

US ambassador to Armenia Marie Yovanovitch said that US government pays a great attention to ensuring security of the energy system as well as to the construction of the nuclear unit.

Among the issues discussed at the conference were the ones connected with the new models of nuclear units, environment protection, etc.

42. “ARMENIAN RED CROSS” SUPPORTS THE GEORGIAN ARMENIANS WHO APPLY FOR SHELTER IN ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

With the support of UN High Commissioner for refugees the “Armenian Red Cross” implements project of support to the Georgian Armenians who apply for getting shelter in Armenia.



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Head of the disaster management and population movement department of the office Edmon Azarian told Armenpress that within the frameworks of the project this month nearly 25 shelter applicants are ensured with food, medical support and legal consultation. According to E. Azarian, the number of Georgian Armenians who apply for shelter in Armenia has sharply increased conditioned by the Georgian-Ossian conflict in August last year.

Within the frameworks of the project the office also conducts monitoring in the border check-points to find out whether the number of people who want to come to Armenia and the illegal migration increased or not. The project kicked off at the beginning of this year and will last by the end of the year. It costs 11 million drams.

During 2002-2007 the "Armenian Red Cross" implemented project of support to the refugees in Armenia. From 2008 the office supports only the applicants for shelter in Armenia.

43. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ARMAVIR PROVINCE HOSPITAL TO KICK OFF FROM JUNE 1 [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

Reconstruction works of Armavir province hospital will kick off from June 1.

Deputy Governor of Armavir Larisa Muradian told Armenpress that within the frameworks of nearly 2 million USD provided by the World Bank the medical institution is intended to be brought in line with international standards and filled up with newest medical equipments. Today there is a lack of nearly all the medical equipments in the province.

L. Muradian informed that in the nearest future the Armavir medical institutions will be armed with "anti-gyurzin". Each year nearly 20 ampoules of antidotes are consumed in the province. This year no cases of snake bite have been registered in the province.

44. 43 EXAMINATION CENTERS ESTABLISHED IN THE REPUBLIC FOR CONDUCTION OF THE UNIFIED EXAMINATIONS [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

43 examination centers have been established in the republic for conduction of the unified examinations.

Media responsible of the assessment and testing center Gayane Manukyan told Armenpress that this year the number of children in the examination center will reach 250-300; 2 square meters of territory will be provided to each graduate. 13 examination centers will function in Yerevan.

On these days the Center of assessment and testing trains the examination organizers for proper organization of the exams.

The center of assessment and testing has also prepared films on organization of examinations for organizers as well as for the graduates. They have been multiplied and sent to all the schools of the republic.

The examinations will kick off from June 2: unified examinations will be organized for "Biology", "Geography" and "General history" subjects. On June 5 the graduates will take exams in "Armenian language and literature", on June 9 – "Mathematics".

Exams in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Persian languages are scheduled for June 12 and in Russian language – on June 23.

The joint exam in "Armenian history" and "Chemistry" subjects will be held on June 19.

45. A BENEVOLENT FAIR DEDICATED TO THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PROTECTION OF CHILDREN TO BE ORGANIZED JUNE 2 IN THE YEREVAN PARK OF VICTORY [ARMENPRESS, 05/27/09]

A benevolent fair dedicated to the International Day of Protection of Children will be organized June 2 in the Yerevan Park of Victory.

The event is organized by the "Center of Children's Adoption and Orientation" of the Fund for Armenian Relief. Deputy Head of the Center Ramona Ktakian told Armenpress that the product provided by the companies which support the event – candy, ice-cream, juice, etc will on that day be sold by the representatives of show business and culture figures. Sum got from the sale will be provided to the center.

"With that sum many social issues connected with the children will be solved and notable works will be implemented, the sum will help to expand the project implemented by us," R. Ktakian noted.

The Center made such an initiative also last year. According to R. Ktakian this time more organizations have joined them. After the fair, concert and fireworks will be performed for the children.



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During 2009, 63 children who have been left into oblivion, abandoned by the parents and have undergone violence in their families have found shelter in the "Center of Children's Adoption and Orientation", R. Ktakian said.

According to the charter of the center only 3-18 year old children must be adopted for average 30 days' period but there are also exceptions.

"Through the "hot line" functioning in our center neighbors, relatives, policemen and merely people who are concerned with the fate of the children make urgent calls," R. Ktakian said.

Within the frameworks of "Project of service of caring families" the Center has arranged some children who are without shelter in the families and conducts oversight over them. According to R. Ktakian the results of the project are satisfying.

SPORTS

46. NINE ARMENIAN BOXERS CONTINUE COMPETING IN WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

The World Youth Boxing Championship continues in Yerevan. After three days of competition 9 of 13 sportsmen have passed to the next round. Koryun Soghomonian (46 kg), Jonik Tonoyan (54 kg), Artur Kajoyan (60 kg), Volodya Hayrapetian (63 kg), Gorik Tovmasian (66 kg), Hayk Khachatryan (70 kg), Samvel Voskanian (75 kg), Alexan Nazanian (80 kg), and Gor Margarian (+80 kg) continue competing for medals. Six of them will perform in the evening of May 26.

47. GRAND MASTER GABRIEL SARGSIAN WINS CHICAGO OPEN INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

The Chicago Open International Chess Tournament was held on May 22-26 in the U.S. Gabriel Sargsian (Armenia) gained 5.5 out of 7 possible points and shared the 1-2nd places with Jean Elvest (U.S.). G. Sargsian was recognized the first with his coefficients. And another Armenian grandmaster, Tigran Petrosian, took the ninth place with 4.5 points. 800 chess players performed in the tournament.

48. 5 ARMENIAN JUDOISTS TO TAKE PART IN BIG HELMET TOURNAMENT'S REGULAR TOUR [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/26/09]

Big Helmet tournament's regular tour will be held on May 30-31 in Moscow. Hovhannes Davtian, Artur Srapian (both 60 kg), Armen Nazarian, Hambardzum Tonoyan (both 66 kg), and Anush Hakobian (52 kg) will represent Armenia.

Armenia's national team will leave for Moscow on May 29, accompanied by coaches Artur Gevorgian and Karen Simonian.

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