



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, December 7, 2009

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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POLITICS

1. ANC Coordinator: Armenia accepted principle of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity [Noyan Tapan, 12/05/09]

A terrible thing took place at the Athens meeting of the Foreign Ministers, Armenia accepted that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict should be settled on the basis of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Armenian National Congress Coordinator Levon Zurabian declaring this at a December 4 press conference mentioned that Artsakh people's self-determination is the most important issue, and to raise it independent Armenia's first authorities placed the issue on OSCE's agenda where Armenia had veto. L. Zurabian reminded that under the first President many proposals were also made with the content of the statement adopted in Athens but the President used his veto.

And today, according to L. Zurabian, the Armenian authorities mention that the signed document also has the principle of nations' self-determination forgetting that Azerbaijan has been always ready to solve that problem by that principle but within the framework of territorial integrity, which means Karabakh's high autonomy as part of Azerbaijan.

Responding to journalists' observation that L. Ter-Petrosian told about Artsakh's autonomy as part of Azerbaijan as early as in 1994 in his interview to the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper L. Zurabian mentioned that President's all statements were aimed at ensuring the military security then. In his words, with such statements the former authorities ensured their victory, and the current authorities with pompous expressions go to a defeat.

L. Zurabian refused to comment upon President Serzh Sargsyan's speech at the RPA last convention mentioning that the opposition is interested not in the statements but in the actions of the authorities. "If they do not release the 15 political prisoners their statements on solidarity are not worth a penny," he noted.



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2. Azerbaijan's perceptions of self-determination of Nagorno Karabakh are still quite far from reality, Richard Giragosian says [Noyan Tapan, 12/05/09]

The OSCE Ministerial Council in Athens has not brought about any change in Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno Karabakh problem. Political scientist Richard Giragosian, Director of the Armenian Center for National and International Studies (ACNIS), expressed this opinion at the December 3 press conference. According to him, the statements made by the Azerbaijani side after the Athens meeting show that their perceptions of self-determination of Nagorno Karabakh are still quite far from reality.

R. Giragosian believes that a change in the Karabakh conflict settlement can be expected no earlier than in 5-10 years. The maximum thing that the sides may achieve is an agreement on the Madrid Principles. In his words, Karabakh should be more persistent in its demands that it be included as a side in the negotiations, otherwise it should not allow the Minsk group which "has suddenly become so active" to visit Stepanakert.

R. Giragosian considered Azerbaijan's efforts to purchase new war-planes and a military satellite to be worrying, he also expressed concern about Russia's steps to improve its relations with Azerbaijan. In his words, these circumstances endanger the regional stability. At the same time R. Giragosian said that "Azerbaijan is far from being ready for war by 10-12 years, whereas the Armenian armed forces already today prepare for tomorrow".

As regards the Armenia-Turkey protocols, R. Giragosian expressed an opinion that their weakness is that they do not envisage any responsibility for violation of the agreement. He said that although December 7 is the deadline for a recommendation about the protocols to be made by the Foreign Affairs Committee of Turkish parliament, the parliament will ratify them in February or March 2010 in order to link this issue with April 24 and not to allow the United States to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Nevertheless, according to R. Giragosian, if Turkey misses this opportunity, it will be perceived by the whole world as "insincere and unreliable".

3. Armenian ambassador to Vietnam hands over his credentials to the President of Vietnam [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

Armenian ambassador to Socialist Republic of Vietnam Armen Sargsyan (residence Beijing) handed over December 3 his credentials to the President of Vietnam Nguyen Minh Chiet.

Armenian Foreign Ministry Press and Information Department told Armenpress that at the conversation followed after the meeting the Vietnamese President wished success to the newly appointed Armenian ambassador in the implementation of his mission and noted that since the establishment of diplomatic relations friendly ties are developing between Armenia and Vietnam.

The interlocutors discussed issues on further development of cooperation between the two countries, highlighting the importance of activation of mutual visits, political dialogue, establishment of direct ties between business circles.

BUSINESS

4. Final version of 2010 state budget of Armenia prepared [Noyan Tapan, 12/05/09]

At the December 3 sitting, the Armenian government approved the amendments to the 2010 draft state budget of the RA submitted to the National Assembly on October 2. According to the RA Government Information and PR Department, the revenues and the expenditures of the draft budget have been increased by 65bn drams and 75bn drams, respectively.

The RA minister of finance was instructed to revise the draft based on the amendments and to submit the amended version and the package with the results of parliamentary discussions to the governmental staff. The head of the staff received instructions to submit the draft and the package to the National Assembly in the established order.

DIASPORA

5. Armenian cross-stone opens in La Plata [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

An Armenian cross-stone opened December 5 nearby "Pure Pregnancy" temple in one of the La Plata central squares, capital of Buenos Aires province.



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Armenian Foreign Ministry's Press and Information Department told Armenpress that the cross-stone was opened by the Armenian ambassador to Argentine Vladimir Karmirshalyan, mayor of La Plata Oskar Pablo Bruera, head of the AGBU Buenos Aires branch Ruben Keshishyan.

The event was concluded by the performance of "Gayane" dancing ensemble.

6. General meeting of Assembly of Armenians of Europe to be held in Cologne [Noyan Tapan, 12/05/09]

A general meeting of the Assembly of Armenians of Europe will be held in Cologne, Germany on December 12. As Hayastan newsletter reports, citing an announcement of the Assembly of Armenians of Europe (AAE), the Assembly of Armenians of Europe (founded in 2003) states that assuming the internationally legitimate right to self-determination as a basis, it will focus its efforts on recognition of the rights of Artsakh, in parallel struggling for international recognition of the Armenian Genocide. The announcement of AAE in particular reaffirms its commitment to support with the process of promoting democracy, human rights and freedoms in Armenia.

According to the announcement, the initiative group of AAE has carried out more active work over the past year and made efforts to help organize the activities of the Armenian communities in Europe.

ARTS

7. Lusine Harutyunyan representing Armenia at the 4th solo violinists' contest after Tadeush Vronski in Poland awarded a diploma [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

Lusine Harutyunyan representing Armenia at the 4th solo violinists' contest after Tadeush Vronski in Poland was awarded with the contest diploma.

Armenian Culture Ministry press service told Armenpress that the young violinist has been handed also the diploma after Tadeush Vronski for her artistic personality and a special award for the best performance of Polish composer Kshishtof Meyer's work.

L. Harutyunyan is a third year student of Yerevan State Conservatory after Komitas.

RELIGION

8. Patriarch Ilya II assures that issues on status of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia, ownership of a number of Armenian churches, preservation and restoration of local Armenian churches will be solved [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

Catholicos of all Georgians, Patriarch Ilya II received in his residence December 3 Armenian ambassador to Georgia Hrach Silvanyan and Primate of the Georgian Diocese of the Armenian Church, Archbishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan.

Armenian Foreign Ministry Press and Information Department told Armenpress that during the meeting the sides discussed in details issues on the status of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia, ownership of a number of Armenian churches, preservation and restoration of local Armenian monuments, including churches.

Patriarch Ilya II assured that the mentioned issues will get their solution through joint efforts and noted the importance of development of Armenian-Georgian ancient-long relations. He also expressed his desire to host His Holiness Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II.

SOCIAL

9. COAF and HSBC Bank Armenia sign agreement on environmental protection and women's entrepreneurship development project [Noyan Tapan, 12/05/09]

The signing of the agreement on the Environmental Protection and Women's Entrepreneurship Development in Rural Areas project by the Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) and HSBC Bank Armenia CJSC took place at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Yerevan on December 4. The agreement was signed by Garo Armen, COAF Founder and Chairman of Board, and Tim Slater, Chief Executive Officer of HSBC Bank Armenia.



The project's budget is 36 thousand USD, 25 thousand USD of which is provided as a grant by the bank, and 11 thousand USD is allocated by COAF. The purpose is to organize production and wide use of environmentally friendly, reuse bags made of cloth, which will replace paper and plastic bags. According to the project's executives, the project is unique and long-term as it will solve a number of problems peculiar to rural areas of Armenia.

In the words of G. Armen, this cooperation of a charitable organization and a financial company is an excellent example aimed at ensuring a clean and safe environment and encouraging women's entrepreneurship in rural communities. Another partner of the project is the network of supermarkets "Star", which, like HSBC Bank Armenia CJSC, does not pursue any interest while participating in the project.

T. Slater stated that by tradition, their bank implements charitable projects for vulnerable groups of the population and for children's education, but it agreed to cooperate with COAF on this project which will help create not only a clean environment, but also a stable business environment.

Director of "Star" network Vahan Kerobian announced that they had expressed a willingness to buy the first set of bags (1,000 ones) for their trade network. It is envisaged introducing a system of bonuses to encourage customers to use bags repeatedly.

10. By the end of the year "Haypost" company plans to reopen more than 10 post divisions [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

By the end of the year "Haypost" company within the framework of the "Haypost" marathon program is planning to reopen more than 10 post divisions.

Press and Public Relations officer of the company Gevorg Abrahamyan told Armenpress that already 15 post divisions have opened. They were completely reconstructed, renovated and equipped with modern devices.

In near future the staff training program will kick off as well as On-Line network will be applied. G. Abrahamyan said that the company undertakes all the necessary measures to make the works in accordance with international standards.

"Haypost" is also planning to put into circulation two new post marks, each with 40,000 issues and dedicated to Daniel Varuzhan's 125th and Khachatur Abovyan's 200th anniversaries.

11. 21st anniversary of 1988 disastrous earthquake marked today [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

The 21st anniversary of Spitak disastrous earthquake is being marked today almost in all the towns ruined as a result of the earthquake. In Gyumri the commemoration ceremony started from the ceremony in the St. Virgin Mary Church known in people as Seven Wounds.

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, accompanied by the representatives of legislative and executive bodies, Shirak governor Lida Nanyan, Gyumri mayor Vardan Ghukasyan, Russian ambassador Vyacheslav Kovalenko, at 11.41, the hour of the disastrous earthquake, put wreaths and bowed their heads in the memory of the victims of the earthquake.

The Gyumri's St. Rescuer Church, built in the 17th century just as the one in Ani, was completely ruined from the 1988 earthquake and is being reconstructed preserving its architectural appearance. The construction of the church is expected to be completed in 2012. Gyumri's St. Grigor Lusavorich Church has bowed because of its emergency condition. St. Nshan, St. Hakob and Seven Wounds churches are operating in the town.

About 20 big and small towns and 358 villages were damaged from the earthquake, 58 of which were completely ruined. The disaster hugely harmed dwelling and state buildings, industrial institutions, state organizations including 377 schools, 245 kinder-gartens, 560 medical institutions, 324 community and cultural centers. Roads and bridges, energy sources and water pipelines were hardly damaged. Serious losses were registered in Spitak, Vanadzor, Gyumri. According to the official soviet information about 25,000 people were killed, 140,000 became handicapped and 530,000 remained homeless as a result of the earthquake.

Today Armenian President, within the framework of his working visit to Shirak, will also visit Akhuryan community of the province and get acquainted with the process of construction of sugar factory. Serzh Sargsyan will also visit Ani region of the province, Isahakyan community to get acquainted with construction of the gas pipelines.



12. The number of people infected with A/H1N1 flu reached 35 in the republic [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

The number of people infected with A/H1N1 flu reached 35 in the republic, chief epidemiologist of the republic Ara Asoyan told Armenpress. He informed that currently 3 patients are being treated in the Nork infection hospital. Their condition is assessed as satisfactory and currently nothing threatens their life. The rest patients have been treated and signed out. Among 15 patients the existence of the flu is suspected.

A. Asoyan said that A/H1N1 flu must not be singled out and be specially accentuated, it must be viewed as a type of flu, especially taking into consideration that according to international information the cases of deaths from seasonal flu are more than from A/H1N1 flu.

The events directed toward preventing the entrance of the flu and its spread continue. Steps are being undertaken to acquire injections.

13. Armenian Education and Science and Healthcare ministers will meet with the Armenian Prime Minister to discuss issue on suspending classes in educational establishments [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

Armenian Education and Science and Healthcare ministers will meet today with the Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan to discuss issue on suspending classes in the secondary, higher and pre-school educational establishments to prevent the spread of the seasonal influenza.

Armenian Education and Science Ministry's press department told Armenpress that the classes are expected to be suspended for a week. The official decision will be publicized afternoon.

14. Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan paid today visit to the regions suffered from the 1988 earthquake [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan paid today visit to the regions suffered from the 1988 disastrous earthquake to pay tribute to the memory of the innocent victims of the earthquake. In St. Revival Church of the town of Spitak the prime minister participated in the service in commemoration of the victims.

Governmental press service told Armenpress that the prime minister and people accompanying him put wreath on the monument to the victims of Spitak earthquake.

Afterwards Tigran Sargsyan left for Vanadzor, visited St. Virgin Mary church.

15. An educational training on "European Youth Policy, Institutions and Programs" to be conducted in Tsakhkadzor [Armenpress, 12/07/09]

"All-Armenian Youth International Center" fund collaboratively with "International Center for Intercultural Studies, Education and Dialogues" NGO will conduct December 20-25 in Tsakhkadzor an educational training on "European Youth Policy, Institutions and Programs".

An official from "All-Armenian Youth International Center" fund told Armenpress that the goal of the program is to promote the participation of Armenian youth organizations in youth policy processes and to develop skills of drafting international projects and of implementing them.

The program will be implemented by the best expert-lecturers. Non-formal educational methods will be applied together with theoretical presentations and discussions.

Youth organizations' members of the age of 18-35 will participate in the training. It is intended that as a result the participants will work out and will implement European cooperation projects by getting involved in the organization process of European Youth Policy more actively.

The participants will be handed certificates, as well as materials prepared and published by the fund.



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