



# NEWS BULLETIN

## Embassy of the Republic of Armenia

October 2003

### PAN-ARMENIAN

#### President Robert Kocharyan's Speech at the Founding Congress of the World Armenian Organization in Moscow

Dear Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear compatriots,

I welcome the participants of the founding congress of the World Armenian Organization.

I would like to express confidence that the congress will be successful and you, together with other pan-Armenian organizations, will work actively for national unity, for strengthening the Armenian statehood and for Armenia's proper integration into the world community. It so happened in our history that Armenians are scattered around the world now. This is the fate of peoples with a tragic past (assimilation or struggle). However, ordeals sometimes bring forth an amazing motivation for self-organization. This is difficult to explain with simple logic. Today, we are witnessing another example of self-organization. An ability to concentrate efforts on realizing a national idea is a strong trait and a great advantage. I am confident our nation has this trait.

We need to formulate our goals clearly and work on creating the tools that are necessary to achieve these goals. I would single out two main ones: *effective and viable state* and *strong Diaspora*.

These two goals are closely linked and complement each other. Armenia doesn't have too many natural resources and is situated in a complex region. Our wealth is our enterprising, hard-working and educated people. We will succeed if these characteristics are fully uncovered. The shortest and the most meaningful way is through high-paced reforms and effective governance. A stable and democratic Armenia with liberal and science-intensive economy and a strong army – this is the best model for realizing our potential in the South Caucasus. One can hardly overestimate the role of the Diaspora in building such an Armenia. There are more Armenians outside Armenia than there are inside the country. The Diaspora has an enormous economic, political and cultural potential. This potential can and should work for strengthening the Armenian statehood. I often repeat this formula – Armenia with and without the Diaspora are in two completely different weight categories. This formula implies our interest in preserving the Diaspora, in its organization. This allows building targeted partnerships. We have been developing tools for this cooperation consistently.

-These include, first of all, pan-Armenian conferences that fully cover the entire organized Diaspora, where the main objectives for concentrating our efforts are developed;

-These include formation of the pan-Armenian information space;

-These include realization of regular pan-Armenian initiatives that cover science, culture, sports, business, charity etc.

Everything we do in Armenia today involves Armenians from all over the world. Our ties with the Diaspora are moving from emotional-nostalgic contacts to partnerships and mutually beneficial and productive cooperation.

In doing this work, it is important to remember that the Diaspora is very diverse and reflects the peculiarities of different countries.

Moreover, the degree of influence and potential of Armenian communities are directly related to the level of integration of the community in the life of the particular country.

It is hardly possible to bring together the entire Diaspora under the flag of one organization. This is a tempting idea, but it can cause conflict. This flag can be only the state flag of the Republic of Armenia together with the flags of countries where Diaspora is concentrated.

Therefore, we need to find rational ways of cooperation within the Diaspora itself, particularly with organizations of pan-Armenian nature. We need complementarities in internal Armenian affairs as well. The Diaspora's diversity is an advantage, if there is a meaningful common

goal that unites everyone.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The goals proclaimed by your Organization are in tune with the goals and objectives of the Armenian government. We are ready to cooperate with the Organization, to support it. Bringing together the efforts by Armenia and the Diaspora strengthens the country and promotes prosperity, and we have to do everything to support that.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, for participating in the forum.

This is a testimony to the high level of Armenian-Russian relations, the centuries-old friendship and spiritual closeness of our peoples. Russia has the largest and the most integrated Armenian Diaspora. It is devoted to Russia, it lives with Russia's interests and is a strong bridge for Armenian-Russian cooperation.

Today, the Armenian Diaspora in Russia has made a serious bid to expand the scope of its activities. Its potential gives grounds to expect that the bid will be a success.

I wish the participants of the congress productive work.

### ARMENIA

#### ARMENIAN PARLIAMENT PASSES LAW ON OMBUDSMAN

*Yerevan, October 21:* The Armenian parliament adopted the law "On human rights defender" (ombudsman) in the third final reading. The law will come in force on 1 January 2004, and the first ombudsman will be appointed by the Armenian president by the end of February 2004.

The powers of the chief human rights defender will expire after constitutional reforms, as a result of which the powers of appointing the ombudsman will pass on from the president to the Armenian National Assembly.

An advisory council of 20 members will be acting under the ombudsman.

#### PRESIDENT KOCHARYAN VISITS INDIA

*October 29-November 1, 2003:* Invited by the President of the Republic of India Abdul Kalam, President of Armenia paid an official visit to this important country in Asia. Robert Kocharyan was accompanied by his wife Bella Kocharyan, several ministers and business people.

He visited Agra, and the Taj Mahal palace, participated in the opening of the new building of Armenian Embassy built with the funds provided by the local Armenian community, met the community representatives.

In India President Kocharyan met his Indian counterpart Abdul Kalam, PM Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Vice President Bharion Singh Shekhavat. President of Armenia had a meeting with representatives of Indian business and spoke on the economic situation and perspectives of Armenia.

#### WOMEN'S CHESS TEAM OF ARMENIA BECAME CHAMPION OF EUROPE

*October 21:* The women's chess team of Armenia won gold medals at the chess team championship of Europe, which took place in the Bulgarian city of Plovdiv. In the final phase Elina Danielian, Nelli Aghinian and Lilit Mkrtchian gained a victory over Polish chess players. The Hungarian team won the silver, and the traditional favorites of international championships – chess team of Georgia – had the bronze.

#### 2785<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF YEREVAN

*Yerevan, October 12:* Celebrations were held to mark the 2785<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Yerevan, the city founded by King Argishti, the ruler of Urartu.

**OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF ARMENIA**

On *October 9*, special session of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences, dedicated to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Academy took place in Yerevan. Participating in the ceremony, President Robert Kocharyan said that "the establishment of the Academy was an important event in our history and was of a crucial significance in the life of our people and our country." The Academy was established in 1943, in the difficult years of the World War II.

According to the President, the establishment of the Academy started a new era in the history of Armenian science. Since then, the science in Armenia experienced an unprecedented upsurge and the country became one of the most powerful scientific centres in the Soviet Union. The President mentioned that, before independence, the Academy was designed for a huge country and its structure and research activities were determined by that country's scientific development strategy. "A new situation has been created since Armenia regained independence: we face new challenges now. I think as the country is undergoing reforms, the Academy also needs internal reforms. You should determine the pace and directions of the reforms yourselves, considering the existing realities," Robert Kocharyan noted.

In the President's words, the Academy has been consistently overcoming various challenges facing it. The President noted that he is optimistic about the future of science in Armenia. "Science is one of the important factors that could help Armenia become a modern country with a science-intensive economy. Armenia must be a regional centre for intellectual services. This formula requires special attention towards science, otherwise it would be impossible to reach that goal," Robert Kocharyan emphasized.

**FOREIGN MINISTER OF ARMENIA IN CROATIA AND SLOVENIA**

Foreign Minister Oskanian was the highest ranking Armenian official to pay a visit to Croatia and Slovenia from *October 22 to 24*.

In Zagreb the Minister met with Croatian Deputy Prime Minister Goran Granich, Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament and President of Foreign Affairs Committee Zdravko Tomac, as well as his counterpart, Minister of Foreign Affairs Tonino Picula.

In Ljubljana Oskanian met with Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel, Prime Minister Anton Rop and the head of the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce.

Oskanian discussed with the authorities of these countries a variety of economic and political issues affecting each country, as well as regional issues. They shared experiences related to relations with the EU, on the situation in the Balkans and the Caucasus, discussed bilateral issues having to do with signing of legal documents which will contribute to and facilitate economic development in Armenia and these countries.

Exchange visits between business people, exhibitions, business fora will be encouraged by respective governments to strengthen cooperation. Slovenia will take on the chairmanship of the OSCE in 2005.

**OSCE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE IN ARMENIA**

*Yerevan, October 21*: The Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visited Armenia and was received by President Kocharyan. During the meeting Mr. Scheffer noted that the purpose of his regional visit was to learn about the situation in the region and the existing views on regional issues, as well as to discuss the recent developments in the Karabakh conflict and the possible ways of resolving it.

The Chairman-in-Office emphasized that the Karabakh conflict resolution continues to remain one of the most important areas of OSCE's activities. He expressed hope that the process of negotiations will restart and that, with OSCE's assistance, it will be possible to find a solution that would be acceptable to all the parties.

**"ArmProdExpo-2003" EXHIBITION IN YEREVAN**

*Yerevan, October 20-23*: An "ArmProdExpo-2003" 3-rd International Exhibition-sale hosting 45 Armenian local and joint industrial enterprises' products opened in Yerevan. The products displayed at the Expo included Armenian food products, cognac, wine, preserves, meat products, much of which have already found a place in the consumer markets of various countries.

**DEFENCE MINISTER OF BULGARIA VISITS ARMENIA**

*Yerevan, October 22-23*: Bulgarian Defense Minister Nickolay Svinarov arrived on an official visit to Armenia. In a briefing given together with his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsisyan at the Zvartnots airport, Mr. Svinarov said the aim of his visit is to further bilateral ties in the defense sector. The Bulgarian Minister of Defense was also received by President Robert Kocharyan.

The President and the Minister discussed possibilities of expanding the cooperation between Armenia and Bulgaria. Having noted that the relations between Armenia and Bulgaria have developed significantly and have become more dynamic in the last few years, they emphasized the importance of closer ties in the area of defense, security and military-technical cooperation.

**FOREIGN MINISTER OF BELARUS VISITS ARMENIA**

*Yerevan, October 15-17*: The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, Mr. Sergey Martinov paid a three day official visit to Armenia. During the meeting with Mr. Vardan Oskanian noted that the trade turnover between the two countries had doubled over the previous year. They also discussed Armenia-Belarus cooperation in the CIS and at the UN. The Foreign Ministers also spoke about regional issues and the current state of the Nagorno Karabagh negotiating process. Foreign Minister of Belarus met with President Kocharyan and held a joint press conference with Minister Oskanian. During the visit the two ministers signed an Agreement on Cooperation between the two Ministries of Culture.

**UNITED KINGDOM****AMBASSADOR GABRIELIAN VISITS MANCHESTER ARMENIAN COMMUNITY**

On the invitation of the Armenian community in Manchester, H.E. Ambassador Vahe Gabrielyan made his first visit to Manchester. On Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup> of October Ambassador Gabrielyan and his family were the guests of honour at a dinner hosted by the local Armenian community, where local Armenians had the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the Ambassador.

The Ambassador and his family attended mass on Sunday, which was served by the Primate, His Grace Bishop Nathan Hovhannisyán. In his address to the congregation Bishop Nathan Hovhannisyán introduced Ambassador Gabrielyan and welcomed to Manchester.

Over lunch, Ambassador Gabrielyan addressed the gathering of local Armenians, some of whom had come from as far as Leeds and Scotland.

**AMBASSADOR GABRIELIAN ATTENDS CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONFERENCE**

*Blackpool, October 6-9*. H.E. Ambassador Gabrielyan attended annual Conservative party conference held at Blackpool this year. He met officials of the party, including Shadow Foreign Minister Michael Ancram, other party activists, participated in the reception and meetings for diplomats.

**ARAM KHACHATURIAN CENTENARY CONCERT**

*The Royal Festival Hall, London, October 13, 2003*

Sponsored by the Benlian Trust, the St. Sarkis Charity Trust and the AGBU London Trust, the Aram Khachaturian Centenary concert took place with the London Philharmonia, conducted by George Pehlivanian on October 13. The programme consisted of a Suite from "Gayaneh (1942), Violin Concerto in D minor (1940), three movements from incidental music to "Masquerade" (1941), Concerto-Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra (1962) and Suite from "Spartacus" (1956).

Some of the audience had met Khachaturian in person during his two visits to London. The last visit took place in 1977, his works being performed at both The Royal Festival Hall and The Royal Albert Hall, conducted by the Khachaturian himself.

Levon Chilingirian, the internationally acclaimed violinist and founder of the famous Chilingirian Quartet, Sergey Khachatryan, the brilliant 18 year old master of the violin, Alexander Chaushian, a very talented young cellist were the soloists, and George Pehlivanian was the conductor. All were very well received and the concert was a success.