

Sunday, 27 April 2003, 7 pm.  
Venue: Maria Assumpta, Pastoral and  
Educational Centre, Kensington Square, in London.  
Chair: Christopher J. Walker.

## **STRATEGIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

By Armen Ayvazian

Almost a century has passed since the Armenian Genocide, which was carried out by Ottoman Turkey, and up to this day, Armenia, the Armenian nation and each individual Armenian feels the consequences of that appalling tragedy. It will still take a long time to rehabilitate from that terrible blow. What's the impact of the Genocide on the future of Armenia, what do the thousands of victims mean to us, and what's the influence of the genocide on our today's reality? These are some questions, which surprisingly have not been discussed thoroughly and which beg answers. Actually we have responded to them with emotions, instead of measuring the genocide and its consequences in the context of political and strategic criteria. Let us now briefly outline some facts and figures, the numbers of genocide victims and the losses endured by the Armenian nation as a result of that tragedy. Then I will talk about the Turkish denial of the Genocide, its implications for Armenia's security and the most effective way of Armenian response.

### **Loss of Land**

Up to 1915 the territory where ethnic Armenians lived occupied the entire Armenian Highland, that is, historical Armenia. As regards geopolitics, this

territory totaled 350,000 square km, each region of the territory being some sort of a separate 'castle', which had a protective role for Armenians living in that region.

Thus, during Assyrian, Iranian, Roman, Arab, Mongolian or Turkic invasions, if one region was captured the people could easily flee to another region that was as hard to capture as the previous one. Besides, the Armenian forces concentrated in the unconquered regions were capable to regroup and counterattack as soon as the chance offered itself.

Later, during the most vicious period from the 15<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, when Armenian statehood had been destroyed and the national armed forces vanished from the historical scene (smaller contingents had survived in mountainous regions only), the major guarantee for the existence of Armenia was a demographic factor, that is the predominance of Armenians on their native land. Each time after a region of Armenia was devastated by Mongolian, Iranian or Ottoman armies, the Armenian population, which found refuge in neighboring regions, 'repatriated' back to their native lands, almost always managing to outnumber the alien newcomers. And the Armenians always cherished the aspiration for their country to be liberated and free, sooner or later.

The provinces and districts of Armenia were more than simply a geographical territory; for millennia they had provided the creative and protective space for the Armenian nation. The first terrible consequence of the Armenian Genocide was that Armenians were estranged from their historical living space. As regards the strategic factor, the loss of land has deprived the Armenians from their former possibility to have several defensive regions, leaving Armenians to live on

only 1/10-th of their previous space. At present Armenia represents a lonely castle, which lacks any strategic depth and does not have any place to retreat and regroup its forces. Directly speaking, Armenia simply cannot risk the loss of even a single major battle, otherwise it could mean the end of Armenia and the Armenian nation.

### **Cultural Losses**

The Genocide resulted in innumerable cultural losses for Armenian nation. Towns, villages, churches, monuments, manuscripts were destroyed en masse<sup>1</sup>. The scale of the cultural catastrophe can be considered by the following single fact: at present there are as many ancient and medieval Armenian manuscripts in existence as were destroyed during the Genocide (about 25,000). Scores of priceless data and untapped secrets were obliterated, stripping us and the world in general of the rich heritage our ancestors left. The loss of such cultural values as folklore, dialects, and regional ethnographic diversity was a terrible blow to the survival potential of the Armenian nation.

### **Material Losses**

The Ottoman Turkey captured and confiscated all the property of Western Armenians, forcing the survivors to suffer individually the hardship of heavy work in order to provide the bare physical survival of their families in foreign lands rather than participate in the creative making of collective national life.

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<sup>1</sup> Some awareness of these fiscally uncountable losses could be made from the following book, ինչպես ինչպես ինչպես, Երևանի քաղաքում 1915-1925 թվականներին «Վերականգնողական» կոմիտեի օգնությամբ իրականացված աշխատանքների մասին, 1995 [Tachat Yartmian, The

## **Psychological Trauma**

Psychologically, the loss of native land has deprived the Armenians of everyday contact with their national symbols, both man-made and physical, thus hampering the natural spiritual development of the nation. At the same time, the Genocide has implanted in many Armenians an inferiority complex, pessimism concerning their future, in some cases even a kind of self-hatred and rejection of national values in favor of all things foreign.

## **Eradication of a National System**

The perpetrated Genocide aimed and succeeded in large part in exterminating not only masses of people, but a nation, which formed a sound system based on century-long institutions, traditions and customs. The communities, schools, churches and monasteries, various Armenian structures and organizations were obliterated. The Western Armenian leadership, including the intellectual, cultural and political elites, was executed in 1915. Bound to scatter from country to country in search of safety for those who survived in their families, only a part of the Armenian survivors was capable of reorganizing in and around the newly-created national institutions; the rest was drawn into foreign environment and structures and experienced gradual acculturation and assimilation.

In fact, the aim of the Genocide was not merely to kill as many Armenians as possible, or to wipe out the Armenians from the Ottoman Empire; the ultimate aim was to destroy the structural parameters of Armenian civilization. That is why

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Cultural Loss of the Armenian Churches and Monasteries during 1894-1896 and 1915-1925 (Venice, 1995)].

the perpetrators of the genocide never limited their actions to killing people, but purposefully targeted all components of the Armenian civilization: demographic, economic, linguistic, ethnographic, geographic, etc. They wanted to do away with an entire civilization, deliberately destroying more than 5,000 churches and even a larger number of graveyards, some of them by direct orders from the government<sup>2</sup>. Would the security of the Ottoman Empire have suffered, if those churches remained intact or books not been torched?

### **Human Losses of the Armenians in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The genocide of Armenian nation actually falls into four stages: 1894-96, when around 300,000 Armenians were massacred; 30,000 killed in 1909; 1,5 million -- during the 1915-16 genocide, and about 300,000 from 1918 to 1922. The number of victims totaled more than 2 million, and the incidents are justly described as an attempt by Ottoman Turkey to exterminate the Armenian nation wholly and completely.

And pitifully Armenians were afterwards deprived of the right to grieve or seek justice for their victims and persecutions due to the fact that Eastern Armenia became a part of Soviet Union, another 'master,' which did not allow freedom of speech, choice, action and moreover, protest. In addition, the Armenians suffered new massive human losses through the purges of the 1920s and 1930s and

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<sup>2</sup> Today there are only about a couple of dozen Armenian churches still functioning in Turkey. In the decade before the 1915 genocide the Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople assembled an official list of all the functioning Armenian churches within the Ottoman Empire. They counted 210 monasteries, 700 monastic churches and 1639 parish churches. Not included in this list were Armenian churches outside the Patriarchate's jurisdiction - such as those belonging to Armenian Protestants or those in the Kars region, which was then part of the Russian empire. Also unrecorded were the hundreds of abandoned medieval

especially during World War II. 600,000 Armenians fought against Fascist Germany in the ranks of Soviet Army and nearly half of them were killed. To grasp the scope of these casualties for the small Armenian nation, which had been subjected to a horrible genocide only two decades earlier, it would suffice to bear in mind that during the same war the USA and Great Britain suffered matching casualties, accordingly 291.557 American and 357.116 British soldiers killed.<sup>3</sup>

In 1949 the Stalinist regime drove about 100,000 Armenians deep into forlorn Siberia, causing hundreds of deaths. In 1988, at least 25,000 people died as a result of the earthquake in northern Armenia. From 1991 to 1994, more than 10,000 Armenians died in the war for the liberation of Nagorno-Karabakh.

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churches and monasteries that littered eastern Turkey (Source: [http://www.virtualani.freemove.co.uk/outside\\_ani.htm](http://www.virtualani.freemove.co.uk/outside_ani.htm)).

<sup>3</sup> *Funk & Wagnalis New Encyclopedia*, Vol. 25 (New York: Funk & Wagnalis, Inc., 1972), p. 304 (Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States).

## **DENIAL OF THE GENOCIDE: SECURITY IMPLICATIONS FOR ARMENIA**

As a result of all these dreadful developments, currently Armenia is a state struggling for its very survival. Within one recent decade Armenia has experienced not only the devastating earthquake and the enormous economic hardships caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union, but also the rolling conflict with Azerbaijan over the Armenian-populated region of Nagorno-Karabakh. Hence, it is relevant and imperative to look at the question of Armenian Genocide and especially its Turkish denial from these alarming current realities rather than only in a historical perspective.

What have been the implications of the Turkish denial of the Genocide for the modern Republic of Armenia?

When we compare the present situation with the historical record in the region, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict emerges as an organic extension of Armenian-Turkish conflict of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century rather than as an isolated historical phenomenon. Among the striking similarities between these periods are the same Turkish geostrategic objective and state policies of establishing and controlling directly and fully land communication among the Turkophone peoples from the Bosphorus through Baku to Central Asia.

The following summarization of Turkish anti-Armenia and anti-Armenian policies under five major headings would be helpful:

1. **International campaign.** Turkey has been pursuing a decades-long international anti-Armenian campaign in diplomatic, academic and public circles. After Armenia regained its independence, this campaign has been intensified both qualitatively and quantitatively.

2. **Diplomatic relations.** Ankara has been categorically refusing to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia from 1991 onwards. At first, Ankara tried to justify its stance by reference to Armenia's nonexistent territorial claims against Turkey, then by the Karabakh conflict. Later, Turkey invented numerous other pretexts as rationales for its hostile policies toward Armenia. In fact, since 1993, a new pretext has been adopted, namely false Turkish allegations of Armenia's support for PKK Kurdish guerrillas in the form of bases and training on Armenian territory. Turkey even names the places inside Armenia where it says there are PKK bases, among them -- vicinities of the Armenian Nuclear Power Station and Lachin corridor between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. If we recall that Turkey has not hesitated to strike against the alleged PKK bases in a foreign country (Iraq) without any international sanction -- from 1991 to June 1998, there had been at least 55 Turkish assaults into Northern Iraq, including four major operations involving more than 20,000 troops -- then these Turkish allegations do stand as a clear threat to Armenia's security. Until now the international community as well as the Armenian government itself have failed to assess these Turkish policies correctly. **The refusal to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia should be assessed as nothing less than an attempt to fundamentally deny the Armenian right to an independent statehood.**

The leader of Turkey's governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who led the AKP to a landslide victory in the November general elections effectively ruled out any shift from that policy, saying that Ankara "will never



act against the will of the Azerbaijani people” and will not agree to normalize its ties with Yerevan unless the Karabakh dispute is resolved “in Azerbaijan’s favor.”<sup>4</sup>

3. **Turkish-Azerbaijani alliance.** Turkish diplomatic, propaganda and military support to Azerbaijan throughout the period of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has acquired the proportions and characteristics of a mature military-political alliance between Ankara and Baku. The military commitment by Turkey to Azerbaijan is currently fully institutionalised by a variety of treaties, contacts, military aid and training programs as well as numerous joint threats and warnings sounded by Azerbaijani and Turkish policy-makers and top military. One of the most vivid recent examples is a statement by the Azeri Defence Minister Abiyev, who, on March 17, 2001, immediately after the talks with the visiting Turkish Deputy Chief of Staff, told journalists that “Turkish and Azerbaijani armies are two armies of one nation and they together should show Armenia its place.” On March 15, 2001, speaking at the Turkish parliament President Heidar Aliyev directly requested Turkey to intervene militarily into the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on Azerbaijan’s behalf and received enthusiastic encouragement from Turkish MPs.

4. **The blockade.** The effects of the blockade of Armenia by Turkey is nearly equivalent to a full-scale war. It has devastated Armenia’s economy and caused the exodus of more than 1 000 000 people.

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<sup>4</sup> Emil Danielyan, "Turkey's Erdogan Wants Pro-Azeri Karabakh Settlement," *RFE/RL News (www.armenialiberty.org)* 8, January 2003. Ruzanna Khachatryan, "Yerevan Disappointed With Erdogan's Pro-Azeri Stance," *RFE/RL News (www.armenialiberty.org)*, January 11, 2003. After the November 3, 2002 Turkish general elections another AKP leader, Abdulatif Siner, told that they will not soften Turkish policy on Armenia and will continue to lend full support to Azerbaijan. He said Ankara will not risk “jeopardizing relations” with its Turkic-speaking Caucasian ally (Hrach Melkumian, "Turkey's New Government 'Unlikely To Change Armenian Policy'," *RFE/RL News (www.armenialiberty.org)*, 16 november 2002.

At this point we can reach two conclusions: (1) the only hostile step that Turkey has not yet undertaken against Armenia is direct military intervention, and (2) Turkey is an immediate party to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

**5. The denial of the Armenian Genocide.** Before addressing this question directly, let us consider the notion frequently promoted by western mediators and diplomats that history does not have any place in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict.

Many Western observers view the Armenian-Turkish conflict of the 1894-1923 period and the most recent Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh as separate and distinct developments. In contrast, *the Armenians, the Azerbaijanis and the Turks* join together in viewing the current Karabakh crisis as the continuation of the earlier conflicts. As a matter of fact, since the strategic thinking of the parties to the conflict is severely determined by history; history plays a major role in the negotiating process over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. ARMENIA fears the repetition of genocide, TURKEY is worried that in the future its Armenian neighbor will be held up as an economically prosperous and internationally respected state, which would then be in the position to raise questions about moral and material compensations for the colossal damage done to the Armenian nation by the Ottoman Empire (leaving aside the territorial claims). AZERBAIJAN is fearful of losing the region of Nakhichevan (which is separated from it with a large swath of Armenian territory) in addition to what it has already lost. Turkey is also very apprehensive that Armenia would be able to keep its control over the territories that separate it from Azerbaijan. Turkish dreams of ever establishing a land corridor with Azerbaijan (and then to Central Asia) would collapse;

Armenia's borders would provide her with an economic viability and an increased defence depth; a severe reduction of the Turkish influence in the region would follow.

Having been a victim of genocide in the not too distant past, Armenia's population is extremely sensitive to security issues. This sensitivity has been partly responsible for both the unparalleled determination on the part of Armenian fighters during the Karabakh war of 1991-1994 as well as for the mass exodus of population from Armenia during recent years. For Armenians, psychological security, a feeling of safety, is equal in importance to such traditional basic layers of national security as military and economic security. (We note that even the great powers such as the United States increasingly recognize the importance of psychological security for their own populations.)

The Turkish state has never repented committing the Armenian Genocide: doesn't this mean that this state is ready and willing to repeat itself, to complete the "unfinished job?" Indeed the Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide has been the continuation of genocidal policies by other means.

The recognition of genocide by the international community would reduce the possibility of any direct Turkish aggression against the Republic of Armenia. The recognition of genocide by Turkey itself could serve as a rudimentary confidence-building measure in Armenian-Turkish relations. However, present Turkish policies indicate that this is not going to happen in the coming years and perhaps decades. Hence, for an unknown protracted period of time, Armenian-Turkish relations are going to develop in conditions of deep and principled mistrust, irrespective of the level of commercial and diplomatic relationships. Unfortunately, Armenia has failed to clearly present its strategic concerns to the international community. Let us imagine for a

moment a relevant analogy. A small Israel borders Germany that is by all accounts a non-democratic state. This Germany engages in an ongoing civil war against its biggest minority (analogy with Kurdish problem), occupies part of another country (analogy with Cyprus), and makes raids into another country (Northern Iraq). This Germany also denies the Jewish Holocaust and organizes large scale international campaigns of denial in diplomatic and academic circles; tells this imagined Israel on its borders that it intends to "teach it another lesson" (as, for example, the late Turkish President Ozal threatened Armenia); and, finally, imposes a complete blockade on this Israel, the economic result of which equals the result of a full-scale war. There is no doubt that the Israeli government would have tried to explain to the outside world its legitimate security apprehensions. This is something that the Armenian government, for whatever reason, has not yet done, and this lapse has contributed to the complete indifference of the international community to Armenia's long-term strategic security requirements.

**For Armenia, international recognition of the Armenian Genocide has a primary strategic and security importance in addition to its legal and moral value.** The Armenians have the right to expect from the international community credible security guarantees against Turkish pressures, which have all the potential of spilling into a direct military intervention.

## **Organized Repatriation as the Path for the Development of the Armenian State and Nation**

In today's extremely volatile international situation, the Armenian people should be ready to bear independently the responsibility for the security and prosperity of their homeland, against all odds and threats.

Armenians should be realistic as well: Armenia does not have much time to create a strong state and to emerge from its current crisis – a few years, or at best a decade. A fleeting glance at the alarming demographics alone compels this conclusion. From 1991 to 2001 the population of Armenia, including Artsakh, has decreased by more than 1 million, currently constituting less than 3 million. If we consider that each year from 1995 to 2001 on average 50-60,000 people left Armenia, then, if the emigration continues at the current pace, by 2010 Armenia's population could decline to between 2 and 2.5 million. Moreover, most of the émigrés will be young people and skilled professionals. The remaining older and less educated workforce will be inadequate to meet Armenia's most elementary national security needs in the army, or to develop the economy, or press for the bare minimum of social justice for a prosperous and democratic state (and without societal pressure, such a state cannot be achieved). Thus it is a vicious circle: Emigration creates unfavorable socio-economic conditions, which in turn feed emigration. Hence emigration must be stopped at all costs. However, it will not stop by itself, and if unchecked, will continue without end.

It is time to cure and compensate for the consequences of the enormous emigration from Armenia. It is time to plan and implement a massive, organized immigration, which should take the form not of willy-nilly repatriation, but rather should be based on solid research with clear solutions to key issues of employment and housing, to which I shall return in a moment.

Repatriation is, amazingly, absent from the agendas of both Diasporan organizations and the Republic of Armenia. Indeed, repatriation is almost a taboo at all manner and levels of Armenia-Diaspora meetings and deliberations, including the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Armenia-Diaspora Conferences.

Neither the traditional structures of the Diaspora, nor the still feeble state of Armenia<sup>5</sup> have shown any interest in organizing any kind of mass repatriation. Fortunately, compared to the past, the current historical circumstances and globalization, which has had a primarily negative and damaging impact on us, now presents unprecedented opportunities to address repatriation on both the individual and collective level, including Armenia's liberal visa policy, increased mobility of populations, media and information access world-wide, and the sufficiency of Diasporan capital to maintain a home and establish a business in Armenia.

The proposed repatriation could be organized in various phases:

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<sup>5</sup> See Armen Ayvazyan, "Essential Elements For Armenia's National Security Doctrine," Part One (in Armenian); Yerevan, 2003, pp. 5-31. "The Systemic Crisis of the Armenian Nation and the Fictive Nature of the Armenian State," *Luyis* (Los Angeles), Apr. 2002, No. 5 (146). *Vasn Hayutian* (Yerevan) Apr. 16

1. Bringing together groups of 2 to 50 or more families in the Diaspora that want to repatriate so that they get to know each other.
2. Each group would collect capital to organize a business in Armenia that would support the group and give them work, each with a share proportional to investment.
3. Each group would send its representatives to Armenia for 2-3 month business trips to study the market and prepare work and living conditions.
4. Depending upon circumstances, repatriation could take place in stages or in a single organized group (which would make a deep impression on diasporan public opinion).

The repatriates would not be dependent upon any structure and would not have exaggerated expectations, since in Armenia would be awaiting the homes they themselves bought (or built) and their business and work. In the first wave would be former local inhabitants or “Hayastantsis,” which means they would be well aware of Armenia’s current economic, legal and other conditions and would stand to be more realistic.

Another workable program can involve the Diasporan Armenians aged 64 and over to retire in Armenia. A unique study of this possibility concludes that even if only 5% of the 600,000+ Diasporan Armenians aged 64+ retire in Armenia, this would result in \$750 million direct economic investment into Armenia in a year (30,000 x \$25,000=

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(#14), 30 (#15), May 14 (#16), 2002; *Or* (Yerevan) May 16, 18, 21, (#19, 20, 21); *Iravunk* (Yerevan) May 31, 2002 (#41/628).

\$750 million/year). Besides, it would increase consumption of local goods and services (which is the quickest way to spur economic growth) as well as create a wide range of skilled and semi-skilled jobs. The spillover impact would include incentives for families to visit their retired relatives in Armenia (that is the tourism income would raise) as well as the improvement in local medical services and infrastructure<sup>6</sup>.

The funding and investing in repatriation should become one of the most important national programs in the Diaspora.

Even a moderate sized organized repatriation would address many of the problems facing the Armenian nation and state:

1. **Demographic.** Only repatriation can avert the imminent crisis of Armenia's depopulation of Armenians.
2. **Economic.** Organized repatriation would improve the country's economic situation, since tens of thousands of Armenian families would be returning with the businesses they themselves established, which would be a great impetus to the country's economic development, significantly expanding the

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<sup>6</sup> The author of this study correctly mentions that "The Diaspora has so far been called upon to provide charity and investment. Armenia should now rely less on Charity and more on jobs created through investment and consumption by the Diaspora;" **Antoine Terjanian**, "Retirement and Assisted Living in Armenia: How can we make it possible for 5% of the 600,000+ Diasporan Armenians aged 64+ to retire in Armenia?" Talk presented at the AmCham (American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia) Conference on *Diaspora as a factor of Country Competitiveness*, October 24, 2002, Yerevan.



internal market and consumption. In addition, the repatriates will bring with them significant capital.<sup>7</sup>

3. **Moral and Psychological.** The repatriates will bring new energy and enthusiasm to the homeland, significantly improving the depressed psychological state of the population living in Armenia. They could contribute to relieving the tension in nearly all of the vital spheres of life, from defense and the economy to the legal rights of the population. Many of our compatriots living abroad in recent years (of course, not all) have lived in better conditions than those who stayed in Armenia. Repatriates would play the same role that reinforcements play in a battle, when it is essential to replace tired and worn-out troops with specially selected reinforcements.
4. **Legal.** Those establishing permanent residence in the homeland will not tolerate abuses of power. They will bring a completely new and vigorous impetus to the on-going struggle for social justice and equal rights in Armenia. This will in particular be fostered by their having a certain economic independence and self-reliance and by their being organized in groups from their own circles. In this way civil rights and the legal framework will experience an unprecedented period of development.
5. **Cultural.** Those establishing permanent residence in Armenia will have the goal of teaching their children Armenian, becoming involved in Armenian culture, and living with Armenian mores and customs (implicit in their desire

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<sup>7</sup> For example, each family of 4 returning from the US could bring, let's say, \$30,000 on average. Even calculating conservatively, 20,000 families (80,000 people) could bring \$600 million, 40,000 families (160,000 people) \$1.2 billion, 60,000 families (240,000 people) \$1.8 billion, and 100,000 families (400,000 people) \$3 billion.

to return to Armenia).<sup>8</sup> They would deliver a jolt to the anti-national, anti-cultural distortions that have suffused Armenia recently.

6. **Scientific.** A number of young people would enter Armenia as native speakers of foreign languages, who in the future could make major contributions to Armenian scholarship and science.
7. **Health.** Repatriation would permit Armenians from different, often distant, subgroups of the Armenian nation to meet and mix diversifying the genetic make up and improving the health of the next generation.
8. **Maintaining Armenian Identity.** Repatriation will save Armenians in foreign lands from the inexorable process of assimilation. After all, the preservation of Armenian identity in Diaspora cannot be seen as an end in itself. And what could be the true meaning of this preservation, if not the ultimate reunification of the violently dispersed nation under its own independent authority on its own land?

In a word, at this historic moment, the highest priority of the Armenian nation should be an organized repatriation. The first hundreds should be followed by thousands, and thousands by tens of thousands...

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<sup>8</sup> I wish to express my fundamental disagreement with Academician Khojabegyan's opinion that in order to encourage repatriation, a special program should be established to permit "those children who are students in middle school and high school to continue, upon repatriation, to study in the language that they have started. We should not impose the requirement that if they are Armenian they must study in Armenian. In time they will learn Armenian." (V. E. Khojabekyan, *Reproduction of the Armenian Nation*, pp. 452, 453). That proposal does not only undermine the nation and the state, it is also impractical, because it is not possible in any education system to carry on instruction in scores of languages, without destroying the very future of the nation through the schools. Although I have high personal regard for Acad. Khojabegyan as a patriotic scholar and citizen, nevertheless I believe that his proposal could be accommodated and corrected by introducing special Armenian language courses for returning students.

Finally, despite all the above mentioned blows to Armenia, the Armenians embody a unique perseverance and can be considered a resilient nation, for they have found the strength to survive, rehabilitate and continue striving for development. Indeed it is this resilience and determination which we all need to draw upon as we build a state today, hopefully one which will better withstand and overcome any future challenge and continue to grow and prosper.

Armen Ayvazyan

*Adjunct Senior Lecturer of Political Science*, American University of Armenia.

*Adjunct Senior Lecturer of History*, Yerevan State University

*Senior Researcher, Matenadaran*, The Yerevan Institute of Medieval Manuscripts

Phone: (374-1) 51-26-73 or 49-06-56

Fax: (374-1) 51-26-77

E-mail: [aaivazia@aua.am](mailto:aaivazia@aua.am)