

# World Armenian Youth Network

## WostAYN

November 2015



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*Fostering the unity of Armenian Youth Worldwide  
Paving the way to a stronger Homeland.*



### World Armenian Youth Network (WostAYN)

is an umbrella organization which unites more than 28 worldwide Armenian youth organizations.

WostAYN strengthens Diaspora-Homeland partnership, brings together the Armenian Youth worldwide around the idea of national identity and national value, enhances the role of youth organizations and youngsters representing Diaspora in their communities, fosters the youth policy development and implementation in Homeland and Diaspora .

We aim to bring together youth organizations, associations and clubs for their abilities to contribute with the development of Armenia-Diaspora Relations, participatory and effective solution to the issue of preservation of national importance.

## The Light after decades of Darkness: Kamp Armen returned to Armenians

by Varduhi Balyan

### Representative of WostAYN in Turkey

After ceremonies commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, came the news of the collapse of the Armenian orphanage of Tuzla. We became a fist to fight against continued genocide with denying and destruction. After 175-day-long term struggle Kamp Armen finally returned to its original owners.

The Armenian Evangelical Church Gedikpasa, getting all the necessary



permits, bought the land of Kamp Armen in 1962. Construction works by children lasted for months. The founder of the newspaper Agos, Hrant Dink was one of the children.

Kamp Armen was a summer camp for the children, who were brought from Anatolia and studying their native language and culture. Holding the summer camp, they never forget anything they had learned during the year. As Hrant Dink said, first of all orphans and poor children have created a home for themselves, then a whole civilization.

In 1974 in minorities' funds the property acquisition changes were implemented. Meanwhile, both in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic period, minority foundations were authorized to purchase property. Since 1974, they lost that jurisdiction. During 1936-1974, minorities funds' acquired property must have been returned to former owners and if they were not there, to the state. Kamp Armen received the same fate.

In 2015 on May 6, began the collapse of camp, which was halted by democratic-minded citizens of Tuzla, political parties and a number of NGOs who arrived in the camp area.

Kamp Armen, once purchased by Evangelical Church and built by orphaned Armenian children stood in

danger of extinction. One of the first arriving organizations was "Nor Zartok". Those conducting the work of destruction, after hearing the story of the camp, refused to work and brought the cars outside. "Nor Zartok" and a number of activists decided to occupy the camp area and prevent the ultimate destruction of the building, demanding the return of Kamp Armen to its original owners.

All this time continued the liberation struggle of Kamp Armen: a struggle which brought together many people, regardless of nationality and age. On the 175th day of this struggle Kamp Armen returned to its original owners, the Armenian Evangelical Church Gedikpasa.

Since the genocide of the Armenian people in 1915, this was the first great victory, hopefully, not the last. Armenians demanded their rights, and justice has been restored. It must be highly rated the struggle of non Armenians, who stayed there till the last day of the struggle and didn't leave us alone.

There is no doubt that the Turkish authorities had used this step as an election campaign. However, this was a great victory for all of us.

Now each of us has another mission: to make Kamp Armen a corner, which brings a great benefit to the society and which will continue to carry the mission of founders.

### "One Book, One Destiny."

This is the title of WostAYN's initiative aimed to enrich the libraries of the institutions in Armenia, which have an important role in the training and development of young generation. In collaboration with Federation of Youth Clubs of Armenia, in the face of Gegharkunik region "Community Pulse" ("Hamaynki zarkerak") Youth NGO with WostAYN on November 3, 2015 in the frame of "One Book, One Destiny" initiative provided fiction books to N2 Primary School after Artak Ohanyan of village

### WostAYN gives a chance to

- be involved in WostAYN's Pan-Armenian youth network and cooperate with worldwide Armenian youth organizations.
- take part in Pan-Armenian educational and cultural programs, campaigns, conferences, summer schools, forums, etc.
- acquire new partners and relevant knowledge and skills,
- make your voice be heard at the international and Pan-Armenian level.

Vardenik.

"Pupils welcomed us with great enthusiasm, they looked through the books with interest and each chose his favorite one," announces Artush Khachatryan, the head of "Community Pulse" ("Hamaynki zarkerak") Youth NGO.

Highlighting the continued role of book in educating a new generation, in the frame of this initiative WostAYN is going to provide books to libraries in different parts of Armenia in order to promote a new generation of social-cultural, spiritual development, improving the quality of education.





[www.wostayn.net](http://www.wostayn.net)

## Meeting with the representatives of Armenian Academic Association in Sweden

### Meeting with Armenian language teacher from Uppsala city

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of November World Armenian Youth Network hosted Armenian language teacher Hasmik Arutyunyan from Uppsala city of Sweden.

During the meeting the activities of WostAYN were presented, issues related to Armenian youth in Sweden were discussed, as well as the possibility of involvement of Armenian youth in Sweden in Pan-Armenian projects organized by WostAYN was touched upon.

The meeting ended up with expressing great willingness to cooperate in the future.



The chairman of World Armenian Youth Network (WostAYN) Atom Mkhitarian met the representatives of Armenian youth, cultural and educational organizations in Stockholm.

At the meeting representative of the organizations introduced the Armenian community, the existing Armenian organizations, the problems of around 3,000 Syrian Armenians having moved here in recent years, and the initiatives by the Armenian church and by the youth.

Mr. Mkhitarian introduced WostAYN's objectives, structure, implemented and planned projects for the near future. A special interest was drawn on the procedures and requirements for membership in WostAYN, as well as on the opportunities of getting involved in Pan-Armenian youth programs.

As a result of the meeting the newly formed Armenian Academic Association in Sweden will soon become a member of WostAYN by having its representative on the board.

### Swearing-in ceremony of the 23-rd group of the U.S. Peace Corps

The Swearing-in ceremony of the U.S. Peace Corps volunteers' new group took place on 12 November 2015.

39 volunteers made a solemn oath to use their professional skills to serve for the benefit of the Armenian nation.

The Peace Corp volunteers will depart to communities across Armenia to serve for two years as English Teachers and Community and Youth Developers.

The swearing-in ceremony took place in Republic of Armenia headed by US Ambassador Richard Mills.

Among the invited guests were representatives of governmental structures, international and local organizations. The World Armenian Youth Network was represented by the Secretary General Hayasa Tahmazyan.

## The world celebrates World Youth Day

In 1945, a number of youth organizations came together on November 10 and made it the Day of unity and reconciliation of Youth.

By celebrating the World Youth Day, once again the world highlights and praises the role of youth as a driving force for world peace, democracy and human rights.

World Armenian Youth Network (WostAYN) by uniting 23 youth organizations from 20 countries and using non-formal education in youth work methodology congratulates to World Youth Day.

We believe the key to solving the most complex problems is in the hands of youth, who are organized, recognize the immense potential, who are persistent, fearless and know the price of peace.

For his part, acting on behalf of public benefit activities of young people and youth work in favor of strengthening Armenia-Diaspora ties, WostAYN will identify and develop the enormous potential of youth from around the world.

*with best wishes,  
World Armenian Youth Network*

The number of Armenians living in Spain, the majority of whom emigrated from Armenia in recent years, is close to 40.000. Whereas active community life is not so active, programs and activities are comparatively few. Church ceremonies are conducted in non-Armenian churches in one-off rental method in cities populated with Armenians.

## WostAYN can have an important role in organizing of Armenians in Spain

Atom Mkhitarian, the President of the World Armenian Youth Network, met with the Chairman of the Armenian Cultural Association of Barcelona, Tatev Sulyan. The structure and the details of the planned projects of WostAYN, the initiatives carried out by WostAYN member organizations in European countries and

the working plan for 2016 were discussed during the meeting.

There will be held the opening ceremony of “Hayots Doon” in Barcelona after one week. “Hayots Doon” actually is a community center; it includes a Sunday school with 25-30 students, three different age groups of national dance, youth club for discussions. (“Hayots Doon” was established in Barcelona at 2010, but has been placed at another address).

According to Mr. Mkhitarian, WostAYN can involve Spanish-Armenian youth in Pan Armenian and European youth programs and promote community development, improvement of youth leadership skills and help youth to build closer ties with the other Armenian institutes of different countries.



## “Destruction of Jugha Cross-Stones” photography exhibition held in Belgium

WostAYN member “Nuard” Armenian cultural association organized a photography exhibition entitled “Destruction of Jugha Cross-Stones” at the cultural center RIX in Antwerp, Belgium on November 13, 2015. Over four dozen photos introduced the guests the creation and the barbaric destruction process of the Armenian cross-stones in Jugha.

Within the framework of the exhibition the chairman of the “Nuard” Armenian cultural association Gevorg Minasyan delivered a lecture. He conveyed historical information of the cross-stones in Nakhijevan, Jugha, spoke about the treaties of Moscow and Kars, about Azerbaijanization of Nakhijevan, and about the destinies of Nakhijevani Armenians and cross-stones.

During the exhibition two documentary films were screened in different languages which likewise raised the visitors’ awareness of the barbaric treatment of Azerbaijani authorities towards the Armenian historical and cultural monuments. Visitors were also provided with information materials about the subject matter.

At the end of the exhibition, the chairman of the association Gevorg Minasyan informed that the association intends to organize the exhibition in other cities of Belgium, as well as in neighbour countries.

Press service of “Nuard” Armenian cultural association  
Representative of WostAYN in Belgium



## The Armenian youth in Germany will be actively involved in the projects initiated by WostAYN

In 2003 by the initiative of Armenian students studying in different Universities of Germany it was possible to create “HAIK” club, which has been operating since then and unites more than 300 young people.



On the 28<sup>th</sup> of November the newly elected board members of the club hosted Atom Mkhitarian – the chairman of World Armenian Youth Network (WostAYN), in their office located in Frankfurt am Main.

The members of “HAIK” have been involved in the Pan-Armenian and international projects of WostAYN since 2010.

Mr. Mkhitarian presented the work plan of WostAYN for 2016 and the ways that member agencies can take to have contribution to the development of the programs or the organization of activities. In particular, one of the projects of WostAYN planned for the next year will be held in Germany and the members of “HAIK” will be enrolled in the preparation activities.

During the meeting some key issues concerning the organization of Armenian community in Germany, the development of Armenia-Diaspora cooperation were discussed, reference was also made to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pan-Armenian Youth Conference “FUTURE” organized in Yerevan during these days.

## The Second Pan-Armenian Forum for Leaders and Representatives of Armenian Youth Organizations

On November 27, the RA Ministry of Diaspora, the Union of Armenians of Russia, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the "Imast" (Meaning) Youth Association of Nizhni Novgorod launched the 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum for Leaders and Representatives of Armenian Youth Organizations of Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora, which is entitled "Future". Forum aimed to identify and consolidate the potential of young and active Armenians of Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora in the fields of science, law, politics, journalism, information technologies, arts, culture and other fields and discuss the opportunity for implementation of their development programs in Armenia, as well as contribute to the preservation of the Armenian identity and language, resist the challenges of assimilation facing youth and strengthen the Armenia-Diaspora partnership and the relations within



Armenian communities of the Diaspora. The forum had brought together nearly 70 young Armenians from 10 countries around the world. Among the participants were board members of World Armenian Youth Network: Astghik Avetisyan (Armenia), Iona Hobosyan (Netherlands), Hayasa Tahmazyan (Armenia), Shahnur Minasyan (Belgium), Artyom Mikhalev (Armenia), Slava Mezhdoyan (Georgia), Ani Mkhitarayan (Russia), Rouzanna Yengibaryan (Armenia), Gulnara Rushanyan (Georgia).

The inaugural ceremony began with the welcome speech of RA President Serzh Sargsyan read by RA Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakobyan.

Afterwards, RA Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakobyan delivered her welcome speech to the attendees and



highlighted the main problems which could be solved by Diaspora and Motherland-based organized youth. "Dear youth, today, we Armenians face global, foreign and domestic challenges. To resist these challenges, we need to combine our efforts. Diaspora Armenian youth mainly struggle to preserve their Armenian identity. Your key objective must also be to have the will and determination to assume responsibility for the solution to the Armenian Cause and continue to pursue it. Armenian youth need to be competitive. For that, you must first be educated. The 21<sup>st</sup> century is the century of knowledge. We don't have gas or petrol. Our natural wealth is our intellect, which is endless," the minister said.

During two-day forum speeches had been given by the representatives of the various agencies and governmental bodies. Among them were WostAYN board members Astghik Avetisyan and Iona Hobosyan.



At the end of Pan-Armenian youth forum titled "Future" participants coming from different countries expressed their willingness to cooperate and help each other to manage communities, to promote tourism in Armenia and to develop the national brand.

Also, the declaration was adopted by the participants of the Second Forum for Leaders and Representatives of Armenian Youth Organizations of Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora.



### Meeting with the Executive Director of "Nayiri" Armenian National Cultural Autonomy in Stavropol

Mr. Anton Vardanyan, the Executive Director of "Nayiri" Armenian National Cultural Autonomy in Stavropol was the guest of World Armenian Youth Network (WostAYN) on November 30.

The core of the meeting was membership of "Nayiri" Armenian National Cultural Autonomy to WostAYN. Mr. Vardanyan presented the activities of "Nayiri" autonomy which is contributing to the consolidation of community.

Hayasa Tahmazyan, Secretary General at WostAYN and Artyom Mikhalev, the youth program coordinator of Near East at WostAYN referring to the ongoing activities of organization, presented the structure of WostAYN and answered questions about membership. The meeting ended up with willingness to cooperate in the future.

### The series of WostAYN meetings ended in Brussels



To sum up the meetings with board members and representatives of World Armenian Youth Network (WostAYN) in Western Europe, Atom Mkhitarian, President of WostAYN had a meeting with Shahnur Minasyan, the board member of WostAYN in Belgium.

"Nuad" Armenian Cultural Association will also have its unique contribution to the strengthening of the WostAYN", said Mr. Minasyan.

WostAYN's 2016 plan of actions was also discussed during the meeting.

### The reopening ceremony of "Hay Doon" in Barcelona

The reopening ceremony of the new premises of "Hay Doon" Club was held on November 28. Vicar of the Patriarchal Delegate to Spain and Portugal, Father, Archimandrite Sasun Zmrukhtyan was among the guests. Many Armenians in Barcelona were also participated in the reopening ceremony.

On behalf of this initiative, the Armenian Cultural Association of Barcelona has received congratulatory letters from Mr. Avet Adonts, RA Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Spain and from the Armenian General Benevolent Union.



On the congratulatory letter Mr. Adonts mentioned: "Today, by opening its doors "Hay Doon" becomes a place where Armenian youth will grow, will learn and will be stable by knowing they are the representatives of the victorious nation".

On the congratulatory letter of the Armenian General Benevolent Union it was mentioned: "From the first days of establishment of the Armenian cultural union in Barcelona, AGBU supports it as a partner organization. It is with great satisfaction we are following its pro-national and patriotic activities in the community."

The chairman of the Armenian Cultural Union in Barcelona, Mr. Datev Soulian mentioned his speech that the slogan of the "Hay Doon" is to be integrated, but not to be merged. By reopening its doors, "Hay Doon" puts responsibility on our shoulders to more enrich the cultural, educational, sporting and social life of the community".

Cultural and entertainment programs were organized after the official reopening ceremony.

It is worth to mention that "Hay Doon" was established in the partnership between the Armenian Cultural Union in Barcelona and AGBU. Like other Armenian centers acting in Diaspora "Hay Doon" serves as a platform for the preservation of Armenian identity.

*Datev Soulian  
Barcelona*

"In fact, it was a symbolic meeting. Most of the international youth organizations such as WostAYN are officially registered in Belgium, which gives them an opportunity to be close to the EU institutions.

During the coming year WostAYN will have a representative office in Brussels to be more actively engaged in decision-making processes on international level", mentioned Mr. Mkhitarian.



## Want to join WostAYN?

Armenian Youth organizations, associations and clubs worldwide are welcome to join **World Armenian Youth Network (WostAYN)**. For the instructions, please follow the link: [Become a member organization.](#)

WostAYN also provides an opportunity for Diaspora's young people to become a representative of WostAYN in their countries. If you are the one who wants to be part of WostAYN team and have a contribution to pro-national activities, so you are mostly welcome to [Become WostAYN representative .](#)

## Explore World Armenian Youth Network

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