

**The Activity of «Hayastan» All-Armenian Fund
in the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh)**

Benevolence is a holy mission. It has found expansion in the Armenian reality from time immemorial. Famous Armenian historian Leo writes, «Benevolence, as we know, didn't emerge from Christianity; it comes from time immemorial when a human being discovered the underground life and placed the spirit of the dead in its center. This spirit is responsible for every action a person has committed in this world. The concept of punishment for sins committed and even eternal damnation made a human being live a good life, which is religious teaching and to be rewarded by the judging god of the underground world... Christianity, nearly borrowing this concept literally, developed it more into a benevolent principle with more functions. The most beautiful phenomenon was that the benevolence was removed from a narrow sphere and became an all- human idea to serve as a responsibility for the suffering people without discrimination. [1,451]

Being unrecognized the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh is deprived of the opportunity to obtain financial credits from international financial organizations for the development of social-economic, cultural and other fields. Thus, the assistance of Armenian Americans via benevolent, cultural church organizations and funds deserve great commendation.

Hayastan All- Armenian Fund has played a significant role in this work.

Hayastan All-Armenian Fund is an international charitable organization. It was created on March 3, 1992 in Yerevan by the united efforts of the compatriots of Armenia, the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) and the Diaspora. Its main mission is to assist to the development and prosperity of the Homeland and Artsakh by uniting the efforts of all Armenians.

The Affiliate office of the Fund is the Board of Trustees, the head of which is the President of the Republic of Armenia. The Board consists of members of the RA and the NKR authorities, church leaders, party members, Armenian businessmen and benevolent organizations.

The Fund has local committees in 16 countries of the world. Hayastan Fund's resources come from contributions in the form of National Giving by Armenians of Armenia Nagorno-Karabakh and the Diaspora as well as from the donations of the church, political organizations, and individuals by fund-raising activities like phoneathon, telethons, radiothons, fairs, exhibitions, gala dinners and concerts.

In 1992-2008, the fund initiated more than 100 projects in the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh. 210 apartment buildings and private houses for 960 families, 40 schools and educational institutions, 13 health care institutions, 250 km of highways, 131 km of water mains and 60 km of power transmission lines were constructed. In 1995, financial assistance was granted to the children of perished and first degree invalid freedom fighters». [2, 320]

The Hayastan Fund began its Artsakh activities in 1993 when the war was still being waged, and has carried out diverse projects in almost every region of the Republic. The President of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Bako Sahakyan states, «the Fund has had invaluable input in the social and economic development of Artsakh. Whether in the harsh war years or in rebuilding the devastated country in the post-conflict period and today, when the country is firmly on the course of stable development and faces a multitude of political and diplomatic challenges, our brothers and sisters from around the world have always been there to lend a hand to the people of Artsakh. The Armenia Fund initiatives are essential for the development of our land in a situation where it is virtually deprived of any essential for the development of our land in a situation where it is virtually deprived of any international financial assistance» [3,9].

A wide-scale humanitarian assistance program was granted to the Artsakh Government. These funds were involved in restoring the war-

destroyed buildings, conducting the autumn and spring agricultural projects, obtaining seeds, chemical-weed and-pest killers, and fuel. In 1996-1997, 2,520,000 dollars were invested in realization of the agricultural projects for Artsakh. [4,10]

From 1995 to 1999 the Fund spared no efforts to build the Goris-Stepanakert Highway which linked Artsakh with the Homeland. This project continues to be of strategic importance and is really called a «Life Way». The construction of the 170km «North-South» Highway commenced in 1999; this, too, has strategic importance. This road stretches from Martakert to Hadrout through Stepanakert. It enables the restoration of the residential apartments destroyed during the war, and it will support the development of the Artsakh economy.

The issue of drinking water is also among the most significant problems that Artsakh has ever faced. It is of vital political and socioeconomic importance.

In Nagorno-Karabakh, the Fund continues water supply projects. With the assistance of the Armenian Fund in Germany, water mains, reservoirs, and pumping plants have been constructed in Martouni, Askeran, Kashatagh regions and in Shoushi. For decades residents of the villages of Mets Taghlar, Azokh and Drakhtik have patiently waited for the construction of a central water main. Today their dream has finally come true, thanks to the combined financing of the Hayastan All Armenian Fund's French and Western U.S. affiliates as well as the government of Artsakh. The French Affiliate Office of the Fund has planned to implement water supply construction projects in Askeran region.

With the joint financing of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund's French affiliate and the government of Artsakh an internal water distribution network and a reservoir are being built in Sos, a village in Martuni region. After the completion of the project 242 households (1042 residents) of Sos village will have regular water supply. [5,39]

The issue of supplying Shoushi with water is also of great importance. Currently, the «Revival» Fund of Shoushi continues the construction of the waterline in Shoushi, which will be finished at

the end of the year. The Hayastan Fund plans to implement projects on waterline system. The cost of this project is 2-2,5 million dollars. The renovation of the school and the house roofs in Shoushi is also scheduled. [6]

The construction circular water main and two reservoirs in Artsakh's capital – Stepanakert were completed by the fund with the participation of the Canadian-Armenians. This is the main water network which provides the city with drinking water [7, 9].

«Hayastan» All Armenian Fund Telethon-2009 took place on November 26 in 2009. 15.875 043 USD was collected. 70 percent of the amount was granted to Shoushi, the rest – to the other regions of Armenia and Artsakh.

«Shoushi – Karmir Shouka» power transmission lines with substations in Shoushi and Karmir Shouka were completed due to the assistance of the Hayastan Fund. These provide Martouni Region with electricity. The Fund has built three 60km power transmission lines and the main Stepanakert substation in Artsakh. A radio-television transmission station was built in Goris, which transmits programs to the Southern regions of Armenia and to Artsakh. A gas pipeline was constructed for four villages of Martakert Region[8, 13]. Additionally, 67 houses in Vaghuhas Village and 143 houses in Haterk Village of the Martakert Region, which were destroyed during the war, have been completely reconstructed [9,15].

The Fund also conducts some projects for health care in Artsakh. With the sponsorship of the USA East Coast Affiliate Committee, the Fund has built the hospital and the diagnostic center in Stepanakert [10,56], and by the USA Western Coast affiliate means, the Fund has renovated the Hadrout Regional Hospital [11,28]. The boiler room and the heating network of Shoushi Hospital were repaired by the French Committee. The reconstruction of a new Republican Hospital facility in Stepanakert is scheduled for completion in 2011. In addition, these hospitals will be furnished with modern medical equipment.

The Fund undertook the project «Financial Assistance to Children of Perished and First

Degree Disabled Freedom Fighters» which began in 1995 and will continue up to 2012 when these children become adults. [12,16]

Besides many strategic and vital projects, the Fund continues its school building projects. Many of Artsakh's war-damaged schools have still to be repaired. There are also several schools which operate in buildings that were built for non-academic purposes and lack the amenities of a proper educational institution. Still other schools have not undergone critically needed upgrades or renovations in decades. But the number of such campuses is rapidly decreasing, thanks to the support of Armenian communities all over the world. The first educational establishment built by the Fund is the campus of Stepanakert Boarding school specializing in mathematics and physics programs. It was completed in 1999 [13, 20]. The school has a dormitory, which enables students from remote areas of Karabakh to attend the school. Some of the dormitory rooms are reserved for visiting teachers from Yerevan and the Diaspora.

Baroness Caroline Cox, dubbed as the Guardian Angel of Artsakh, started her humanitarian mission with the village of Verin Horatagh in Martakert Region. The construction of a new school was sponsored by her. Baroness Caroline Cox's involvement and support resulted also in the construction of a school in Madaghis, Martakert Region by the means provided by the Fund's Toronto Office [14]. Another school was opened in Drmbon Village in Martakert Region. The school in the Togh village of Hadrout Region is being reconstructed; it will become an art centre. Schools in the villages of Spitakashen, Chartar were opened in 2009. Schools in Gishi village of Martouni Region and Vaghugas and Hargomer villages in Martakert Region are being constructed. The French affiliate Office has provided Nor Seysulan and Kochogot Villages in Martakert Region, Toghut and Togh Villages in Hadrout Region with computers.

The \$2,250,000 donation of Yeznik Mozian made possible the reconstruction of the vocational Muratsan school in Shushi.[15,41]

In August, 2010 with the support of the USA Western Coast Affiliate Office of the Fund, Stepanakert School N11 was opened.

The project was carried out under the sponsorship of an Armenian American benefactor Jerry Turpanjyan and the NK Government and is the greatest of all schools ever constructed by Hayastan Fund. The three-story building provides schooling for 560-pupils. It consists of three sub-buildings-educational, administrative and a gymnasium [16]. This complex has a library, a cafeteria, nurse's office, computer laboratories and a boiler room.

In addition to school construction and renovation, providing educational institutions with essential means and furniture is a top priority in Artsakh. A large-scale project to provide new furniture to schools in Artsakh was successfully completed in early 2010. Financed by the Armenia Fund U.S. Western Region, 85 schools in Stepanakert, Shushi and other areas in Artsakh were furnished with 1000 classroom chairs, 1,300 model laboratories and 100 cabinets and bookcases. Despite the volume of assistance, 7,000 students in Artsakh are still in need of new school furnishings. [17,27].

Collaboration between the main institute of higher learning in Artsakh and the fund launched in 2009. The Local affiliates set scholarships for many advanced students paying tuition fees. Many needy students received monetary assistance at rate of \$200 apiece. Computers were donated to the University and a project to furnish the college was carried out. Presently, the University's roof is being renovated. [18,47]

The Annual Telethon, which was held in Los Angeles, California, on 25 November 2010, garnered approximately 21 million dollars. This was the 13th Annual Telethon entitled «Water is Life.» This money will be spent to realize the creation of an efficient water service system in Artsakh villages, and the infrastructure development in Armenian villages. [19]

All these became possible only through the united efforts of the Armenians of the Homeland, Artsakh and Diaspora. These results need to be remembered in the future. Garegin II, Catholicos of all Armenians states, «In recent years, we all have witnessed the effects of the projects realized by the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. We have

witnessed the realization of critically important needs in both Armenia and Artsakh through the construction roads, community improvement, and projects aimed at breathing new life into the economic and cultural life. All these achievements are manifestation of our unity, our love for the Homeland and the care for our friends.» [20,15]

The Hayastan All-Armenian Fund continues its development mission in Artsakh.

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**Деятельность общеармянского фонда «Айастан»
в Нагорно-Карабахской Республике (в Арцахе)**

Общеармянский фонд «Айастан»- это общенациональная добродетельная структура. Он был создан 3 марта 1992 года в Ереване силами армян Армении, Карабаха и наших соотечественников из диаспоры. Его основной задачей является способствование развитию и процветанию Родины и Арцаха посредством единения сил всего армянства.

Фонд имеет свои местные органы в 16 странах. Он начал свою деятельность в Арцахе в 1993 году. Фонд осуществляет различные программы практически во всех районах республики.