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# Partnership Initiatives of the UN in Armenia Introduced to Diaspora

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PRESS RELEASE

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Partnership Initiatives of the UN in Armenia Introduced to the American-Armenian Diaspora

United Nations, Yerevan - The United Nations delegation from Armenia, headed by Ms. Consuelo Vidal, the United Nations Resident Coordinator/UN Development Programme Resident Representative, with Mr. Armen Baibourtian, Senior Adviser to UN RC/UNDP RR and Ms. Narine Sahakyan, Assistant to UNDP RR as part of it, paid a working visit to the United States from 21 July to 2 August.

The visit had a twofold purpose: at the United Nations headquarters the head of the UN delegation from Armenia discussed with UN senior officials various issues on day-to-day operations and future strategic planning of the UN Country Office in Armenia, and the UN delegation presented to the American-Armenian Community the programmes and activities of the United Nations in Armenia, in particular, the 'Global Armenia' initiative which partners with the Armenian Diaspora in the implementation of projects aimed at poverty reduction and sustainable development in Armenia. The 'Global Armenia' initiative was launched last year in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Russia, and in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates at the beginning of this year.

During the first week of the visit, extensive meetings were held in New York with the representatives of American-Armenian Community of the eastern coast. At separate meetings with H.E. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, H.E. Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America (who also held a reception in honor of the delegation), H.E. Bishop Manuel Batakian, Eparch of the Patriarchal Armenian Catholic Church in the U.S. and Canada, Mr. Andrew Torigian, Executive Director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, Ms. Consuelo Vidal, highly assessed the role of the Church in the life of Armenian Diaspora Community, and presented the UN initiatives, among others, aimed at fostering rural development and youth employment in Armenia. In this context, Ms. Consuelo Vidal stressed the activities of the different UN agencies in Armenia which through its own structures has successfully implemented various projects in the regions of Armenia targeting the most socially disadvantaged. Engaging Diaspora's valuable expertise in implementation of various UN initiatives in Armenia was another area of prospective cooperation which was well received and supported by the leaders of the American-Armenian Community.

At the meeting with Ms. Louise Manoogian Simone, member of the AGBU Council of Trustees, Ms. Anita Mansurian, Director of AGBU Central Board Programme, and Ms. Kim Yacoubian, AGBU's Main Representative to the UN, the modalities of the Youth Career Trail Project, within the framework of the UN Global

Compact Initiative, were discussed. It is a joint effort between UNDP, AGBU, the private sector and non-governmental organizations to mitigate youth unemployment in Armenia. On this occasion the AGBU-United Nations Special Interest Group, in cooperation with UNDP, hosted a 'Youth Career Trail' fund raising reception on 24 July at the UN headquarters in New York.

Possible future cooperation in various development areas were discussed during the meetings with Ms. Deane Arsenian, Vice-President, International Programs Coordination, Carnegie Foundation of New York, Mr. Shant Mardirossian, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Near East Foundation and with Mr. James Tufenkian, President, Tufenkian Foundation.

The agenda of the visit to Los Angeles included meetings with H.E. Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of America and H.E. Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America, at which Ms. Consuelo Vidal presented the 'Global Armenia' initiative, as well as the TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals) concept, which is a global UN mechanism for tapping on expatriate experts and mobilizing them to undertake short-term consultancies in their countries of origin under the UN aegis. The idea of its implementation in Armenia was received with enthusiasm.

With a support of Tekeyan Cultural Association the 'Global Armenia' project was presented to the Los Angeles Armenian Community at the Glendale Public Library. Mr. Parsegh Kartalian, one of the community leaders, welcoming the UN delegation from Armenia, stressed that the community was delighted that Ms. Vidal proposed the principle of partnership in its relation with the American-Armenian Community. In addition, the members of the UN delegation had an opportunity to discuss with Diaspora media representatives UN-Diaspora cooperation issues at a press event organized in the Hampar Hall of the Western Diocese. Ms. Consuelo Vidal stressed that the United Nations, as a global network of knowledge and best practices, would like to utilize the expertise and skills of the American-Armenian Community for the benefit of Armenia.

The visit to Los Angeles was concluded with a meeting with Mr. Harut Sassounian, President and CEO of the United Armenian Fund, a reception-dinner with the prominent members of Los Angeles American-Armenian Community hosted by Ms. Sylvia Tchakmakchian, and a meeting with Mr. Mark Chenian, Vice-President, Investments for UBS-California.

A reception was also organized by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Matossian and Mr. Jack Koumjian, where the representatives of American-Armenian Community from San Francisco Bay Area were present.

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UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. UNDP in Armenia was established in 1993 and supports the Government of Armenia to reach its own development priorities and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

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