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Statement at 810th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council 20 May 2010

As for delivery by Ambassador Fuad Ismayilov

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson

I have the honour to deliver the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the so-called “parliamentary elections” in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.

The statement runs as follows:

“According to the reports circulated by the mass media outlets of the Republic of Armenia so-called “parliamentary elections” are being arranged to take place in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 23 May 2010.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan reiterates in this regard that the unrecognized separatist regime in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan represents nothing but an illegal structure established by Armenia on the basis of ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijani population. The so-called “elections” are conducted in order to camouflage the annexation policy of Armenia and are aimed at consolidation of the results of the continued occupation of the Azerbaijani territories.

Conduct of such “elections” gravely violates the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the norms and principles of international law, since they are held in absence of the original Azerbaijani population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, and, therefore shall have no legal effect whatsoever.

Any kind of elections in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan may be recognized as fair and free once the expelled Azerbaijani population takes full, direct and equal part in their conduct in lawful and democratic environment equally to the Armenian population of the region. Holding such elections will be possible after the withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces, normalization of life in the region, creation of necessary conditions for restoration of the dialogue and co-operation between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of Nagorno-Karabakh. These steps will open up possibility for the elaboration of the self-rule status for the Nagorno-Karabakh population within Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan calls upon the Armenian side to stop its destructive practice of illegal steps, which does not have any prospects, and instead to demonstrate a good will and take a constructive position in the negotiation process, which has dynamically evolved through

the last year, in order to find a soonest and durable solution to the conflict on the basis of the norms and principles of international law”.

Mr. Chairperson,

Further evidence of Armenia’s intention to secure the annexation of the Azerbaijani territories that it has captured through military force and in which it has carried out ethnic cleansing is provided by its settlement activities, destruction and appropriation of historical and cultural heritage, and systematic interference with the property rights of Azerbaijani displaced persons.

Let me remind my listeners that from 30 January to 5 February 2005 an OSCE fact-finding mission visited the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The main outcome of the mission was its report, which was based on a comprehensive analysis of the situation on the ground. The most important conclusion in the report was that during its visit the mission found evidence of the presence of Armenian settlers in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

On the basis of the findings in the mission’s report, the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, in their letter of 2 March 2005 to the OSCE Permanent Council, discouraged any further settlement of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. In view of the extensive preparations that would be required before the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their places of origin in these territories, the Co-Chairs recommended that “the relevant international agencies re-evaluate the needs and funding assessments in the region, *inter alia*, for the purpose of resettlement” of those moved into the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. They also urged the parties “to accelerate negotiations toward a political settlement in order, *inter alia*, to address the problem of the settlers and to avoid changes in the demographic structure of the region, which would make more difficult any future efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement.” The Co-Chairs emphasized in this regard that “the longer [settlers] remain in the occupied territories, the deeper their roots and attachments to their present places of residence will become,” and that “prolonged continuation of this situation could lead to a fait accompli that would seriously complicate the peace process.”

More than five years have passed since the fact-finding mission visited the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs submitted their recommendations. However, against the background of the unconstructive position of Armenia in the ongoing peace process, nothing has been done to dismantle settlements and discourage further transfer of settlers into the occupied territories. Moreover, numerous reports, including Armenian ones in particular¹, show that the Republic of Armenia, directly by its own means or indirectly through the subordinate separatist regime and with the assistance of the Armenian Diaspora, continued the illegal activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Thus, during this period Armenian settlers have been encouraged to move into these territories, including the districts adjacent to the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, in particular the districts of Lachin, Kalbajar and Zangelan. In addition, this period was marked by consistent measures aimed at altering the historical and cultural features of the occupied areas depopulated of their Azerbaijani inhabitants. In this regard, alleged “reconstruction” and “development” projects for Shusha, one of the most beautiful cultural and historical centres of Azerbaijan, and “archaeological excavations” in Aghdam, both carried out with the sole purpose of removing any signs of their Azerbaijani cultural and historical roots and substantiating the policy of territorial expansionism, give rise to serious concern and justified indignation.

¹ The relevant materials are attached to and distributed with the text of the statement.

It must be pointed out in this regard that as an “Occupying Power”, Armenia is subject to a series of duties under international humanitarian law, as stipulated in the 1907 Hague Regulations (being part of customary international law), together with the Fourth Geneva Convention and its Protocol I, to both of which Armenia is a party. Thus, article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention specifies the following: “The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.” This constitutes the basis and expression of a rule of law prohibiting the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories consisting of the population of the occupying Power or of persons encouraged by the occupying Power with the intention, expressed or otherwise, of changing the demographic balance.

Armenia is also a party to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its 1954 and 1999 protocols, which, *inter alia*, prohibit and prevent in relation to the occupied territory any archaeological excavation or any alteration to, or change of use of, cultural property which is intended to conceal or destroy cultural, historical or scientific evidence.”

In addition to the traditional rules of humanitarian law in regard to the occupied territories, Armenia is also bound by the provisions of those international human rights treaties to which it is a party, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the European Convention on Human Rights.

To the extent that Armenia has violated the relevant applicable law with regard to the occupation of Azerbaijani territory, it is responsible under international law. It is important to note in this regard that, as the Occupying Power, Armenia is responsible not only for the actions of its own armed forces and other organs and agents of its Government, but also for the actions of the subordinate separatist regime it has illegally created in the occupied territories.

Taking into consideration the aforementioned points and with a view to ensuring respect for the principles of justice and the rule of law in the conflict settlement efforts, the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan has requested the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the Minsk Group Co-Chairs and the OSCE Secretary General to conduct as soon as possible a fact-finding mission to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan to investigate the situation on the ground in the light of the clear-cut commitments of the States concerned, as set forth in the relevant international legal instruments. This request also corresponds to the relevant recommendation of the report of the 2005 fact-finding mission.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The facts documented by Armenian sources, testifying to the ongoing organized settlement practices and other illegal activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan^a

1. “NKR government” allocated 700 million Armenian drams for the realization of a mortgage crediting programme, 19 March 2007^b

700 million Armenian drams is allocated from the state budget of the “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR)” for the realization of a mortgage crediting programme. Mediamax reports that the “NKR Prime Minister” Anushavan Danielian said this, answering the questions of the visitors of the “Azat Artsakh” newspaper’s website. He noted that the possibility to improve housing conditions will be given not only to young families, but also to the citizens, which will be chosen by the expert commission. “‘The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic’ is the only country in the region which, at the expense of the state budget, took up the realization of a mortgage crediting programme on preferential terms — by a 6 per cent annual interest rate and up to 20 years time to run”, Anushavan Danielian stated. The “NKR” government is also working out a social mortgage programme, the realization of which is planned to start in 2008.

2. Arts revival: plan to rebuild “Shushi” by returning to its roots as a centre of culture, 15 June 2007^c

Proposals to turn the town of “Shushi” into a centre for arts, crafts, education and tourism by 2020 have been drawn up by an American company, Sema Associates. At the request of the “Shushi” Revival Fund, a group of the company’s architects, headed by Iranian Armenian Seda Yagubyan, visited the town in Nagorno-Karabakh last year. They finalized the design plan after four months of work, which they provided free of charge ... The foundation opened the 400-seat Yerevan Cinema in “Shushi”, equipped with advanced German and Japanese technology, this year on May 9, which is traditionally marked as “Shushi” Liberation Day ... the restoration of “Shushi” will promote investment in the town, leading to an increase in jobs and population.

^a The present annex, containing the information from Armenian sources, refers to the native names of historical Azerbaijani places Shusha, Lachin, Kalbajar and Zangelan in Armenian toponyms “Shushi”, “Berdzor-Kashatagh”, “Karvachar” “Kovsakan”, respectively, which is the yet another evidence of Armenia’s purposeful efforts aimed at defacing the Azerbaijani historical and cultural heritage in the occupied territories. Therefore, these and other distorted names and historical events are given throughout the text as edited in quotation marks.

^b See <http://banks.am/en-news-2-1340.html>.

^c See http://www.armenianow.com/features/7429/arts_revival_plan_to_rebuild_shush.

3. Diaspora is interested in resettlement of these territories, 18 June 2007^d

‘We solved the problem by military actions, but we had to go on to settle these territories,’ said Vahram Gevorgyan, chair of the Promised Land NGO, set up in 2000. The organization implements projects for the settlement of the liberated territories from 2001. Gevorgyan added, ‘we have just realized that these territories must be settled. If we had managed to launch settlement with assistance from Armenians worldwide, the issue of territories would not be under negotiation, and Azerbaijan would not lay claim to these territories ...’.

4. Population promotion: Nagorno-Karabakh residents have good reasons to marry and have children, 11 January 2008^e

The “state” is planning to ensure population increase through a settlement programme. The programme is carried out all throughout Karabakh. Serzh Amirkhanyan, head of “NKR Department on Migration, Refugees and Immigrants”, says that in 2007 within the framework of the settlement programme, 67 houses were built in Karabakh and 23 restored. Eight hundred million drams (\$2,667,000) were allocated to immigrants for house purchasing. He stressed that 20-30 families have filed applications for settling in “Karvachar”, where from 8 to 10 houses are built annually ... According to Amirkhanyan, the funds allocated to the settlement programme have to be at least doubled. The “state” budget allocates up to 1 billion drams (about \$330,000) annually. Amirkhanyan thinks that private funds have to be raised for this purpose as well ... In 2007, 241 families moved to Karabakh for permanent residency, the settlement programme served 445 people.

5. “NKR President”: the “Kashatagh region” is of strategic significance for the Armenian nation, 1 April 2008^f

A three-day (March 28-30) conference took place in the “Berdzor district centre” of the “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Kashatagh region”, which was devoted to the development of the region. ‘This conference, which is devoted to the development of the “Kashatagh region”, is the first sui generis, and I hope that it will become a basis for holding similar events in the future. It will promote effective solution to the problems existing in the region, as well as realization of programmes aimed at its further development’, “NKR President” Bako Sahakian said in his speech made at the opening of the conference.

6. 30 Armenian families live in liberated “Van”, 20 February 2009^g

“Van”, Nagorno-Karabakh — Vardan Vardanian and his wife moved to the village of “Van” when it was established in 1999. Their two children, five-year-old son Sergo and two-year-old daughter Ani-Van, were born here. The village of “Van” is in the “Kashatagh region” of Nagorno-Karabakh on the banks of the “Voghji” River. Mr. Vardanian and his family live in one of the rooms on the second

^d See <http://aramanoogian.blogspot.com/2007/06/diaspora-is-interested-in-resettlement.html>.

^e See www.armenianow.com/features/8051/population_promotion_nagornokarab.

^f See www.armeniansdiaspora.com/forum/showthread.php?t=127936.

^g See www.reporter.am/go/article/2009-02-20-30-armenian-families-live-in-liberated-van.

floor of the local school, which is only three kilometres away from the Araks River, the border with Iran. ‘When we came here, life was a bit hard in Armenia. I am from Berd city and my wife is from Sevan. When we came to live in “Van”, the monthly salary of a teacher here was twice that of a teacher in Armenia. Those who move here no longer want to leave. Apart from the fact that my wife and I are teachers and receive our monthly wages, we can also keep animals and tend orchards,’ he says [...] Yurik Yeghian, head of the village, agrees: ““Van” faces housing issues.’ He adds that recently, state officials approached the residents and began allocating funds for different community projects as well as loans for the purchase of animals. [...] In the past, during the Soviet era, “Van” was called Jhangirbeyli and was populated only by Azerbaijanis [...] Mr. Vardanian does not even want to hear that one day these lands might be handed over to Azerbaijan as peace guarantees. ‘There are such rumours, but these lands were not given as gifts; these lands were liberated with blood and these lands will never be returned. How can you return land? These are our ancestral lands, this is Armenia. I do not believe that anyone would be despicable enough to sign a document returning these lands. I cannot imagine such an Armenian traitor,’ he says emphatically ... The residents of “Van” are mainly from the village of Daratumb in the Yeghegnadzor region of Armenia. Daratumb is en route to the Selim mountain pass toward Lake Sevan. For more than half of the year, it is cold and the living conditions are not good. ‘Since present-day Daratumb is too small for its residents, part of the village, mainly the younger families, moved to “Van”. Currently this village has 30 families and 127 residents. We have families with many children. For example, Husik Khachatryan has seven children, one of whom is already married. The village is expanding not only because of resettlement, but also because of natural growth. This year we have already had five births,’ says Mr. Yeghian ... “Van” was established in 1999. Felix Hayrapetian was the founder of the village and the first village head. Why did they name the village “Van”? This is how the village head explains it: ‘Well, since its neighbours were “Moush”, “Alashkert”, and “Berkri”, naturally this village had to be “Van”.’ “Moush”, “Alashkert”, and “Berkri” are the names of settlements in historic Armenia, now part of Turkey; the city of “Van” in today’s Turkey is the cradle of Armenian civilization. Mr. Vardanian, the school director, adds, ‘It was the initiative of Alexan Hakobian, the former head of the “Kashatagh region”, to restore the historical names.’ Mr. Vardanian believes that those who have stayed there will never return and no one can return these lands, as they already have graves there.

7. Hovanessian stresses urgency of resettling “liberated” territories, 21 May 2009^h

The urgency to resettle the “liberated” territories surrounding the “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic” was a topic of heated discussion Thursday during a weekly parliamentary round table with Armenia’s Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan ... Discussion on the issue began when Vahan Hovanessian, the leader of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation’s parliamentary bloc, asked the Prime Minister about the status of resettlement efforts in the “liberated” territories ... The Prime Minister insisted that Karabakh will always be an important priority in Armenia’s economic, foreign and domestic policies and as a result the economic development of Karabakh will always be part of Armenia’s governmental programmes. ‘The development of all facets of [life in] Karabakh should be accelerated, in order to create more enhanced living and growth conditions,’ said Sargsyan, adding that the resettlement issue was a constant topic of discussion with the Karabakh president and Prime Minister.

^h See www.asbarez.com/62784/hovanessian-stresses-urgency-of-resettling-liberated-territories/.

8. Grow roots: while peace process goes on, Karabakh focuses on demographic and social issues, 22 May 2009ⁱ

Up to 12,000 people currently reside in the “Kashatagh region” alone. In 2008, 47 families (462 people) moved to the region ... In 2008, “Kashatagh” farmers were given up to 70 million drams (\$190,000) in agricultural loans, due to which 9,500 hectares of fields were sowed. In 2009, 16 irrigation channels are to be restored with public funds and agricultural equipment will be leased. Two multi-apartment residential buildings are being constructed in the regional centre “Berdzor”, 10 houses for large families with many children have been built ...

9. Battle of “Shushi”: pan-Armenian charity plans landmark fundraising for key Karabakh town, 29 May 2009^j

The funds to be raised through this year’s annual telethon of the All-Armenian Fund “Hayastan” (Armenia) in November will be spent on the reconstruction of “Shushi”, a strategically important stronghold town in Nagorno-Karabakh ... A number of projects were implemented in “Shushi” in 2008: the water pipe system and water line connecting “Shushi” with the Tadevos spring that supplies the town with water were partly restored. Installation of gas supply systems is near completion. About one and a half billion drams (\$5 million) from the state budget was spent on the projects. The “Shushi” Revival Fund has supported the construction of a tourism centre in the town as well as the current reconstruction of a printing house and the historical “Green” pharmacy. Works on the reconstruction of an urban water sewage network are in progress. Oriental bathhouses and the old market are also under reconstruction. The Tufenkian Foundation sponsored the renovation of the museum of local lore of “Shushi” ... “Shushi” now has a population of 3,600 people.

10. New excavations, new hotels, more tourists: Nagorno-Karabakh gets ready for tourism boom this year, 12 June 2009^k

The year of 2009 promises to be crucial for tourism in Karabakh with the new programmes the “Nagorno-Karabakh government” assigns for boosting tourism and a presumably large flow of tourists this year in the “country”. This year the “Government” assigned 40 million drams (\$108,000) to the development of the sphere, which is four times more as compared with the same figure of the previous year. The “Government” announced that tourism is a priority sphere of the economy in Karabakh, and it provides funds for reconstruction projects of historical monuments there ... In 2009, the “Government” will assign 350 million drams (about \$945,000) for the renovation of monuments and cultural heritage. Renovation works will be carried out in “Amaras” and “Gtchavank”, “Ptkes Berk Vank Church” in “Ulupap”, “Togh”, “Davidavank”, Askeran Fortress and “Chankatag”. Excavations will be carried out in “Azohskaya” cave and in “Tigranakert”. New monuments are being added to this list all the time. A wonderful and beautiful “Khachkar” (13th century) was recently found in the territory of Novruglu village, Aghdam region.

ⁱ See <http://armenianow.com/hy/node/9874>.

^j See www.armenianow.com/features/9914/battle_of_shushi_panarmenian_char.

^k See www.armenianow.com/hy/node/9988.

11. Birth rate is five times the death rate in “NKR Kashatagh region”, 17 July 2009^l

Currently, regional population size in the “NKR Kashatagh region” is about 8,000 people. According to “Kashatagh regional administration head” Kamo Martirosyan, the population rate in the region has been increasing since October 2008. ‘Villagers are provided with interest-free credits to conduct agriculture works. In September 2009, they will be given credit for the purchase of cattle,’ Kamo Martirosyan said. The “administration head” emphasized that current issues are connected mainly with lodging provision, infrastructure development, roads and communications restoration and water supply provision.

12. Tufenkian Foundation unveils new “Kashatagh” initiative, 23 October 2009^m

“Kashatagh”, “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic” — In a recent day of celebration, residents of this small, remote village joined political dignitaries and members of the international community to mark the re-opening of “Hak’s” historic “St. Minas Church”. The church blessing was combined with the unveiling of a new drinking water supply for the village, making the ceremony a momentous occasion reaffirming Armenians’ commitment to restore and protect their ancient heritage in this war-torn enclave ... “Hak village” sits in a remote corner of “Kashatagh” (formerly Lachin), the strategically vital area connecting Karabagh with Armenia ... The “Hak village” project is the latest initiative of the New York-based Tufenkian Foundation. Through a range of social and economic projects, the Foundation has fostered the development and resettlement of “Kashatagh” since the war. In parallel, the Foundation is working to restore and preserve the Armenian monuments found throughout this land. Ms. Virginia Davies of New York City tendered the generous support that allowed the Foundation to restore “St. Minas Church” and establish “Hak’s” water supply. Having flown in especially for the ceremony, Davies spoke boldly and proudly about the project, which she has dedicated in loving memory of her grandmother, Virgine Mouradian, a survivor of the “1915 Armenian Genocide” ... ‘This is only the beginning,’ Davies said. ‘After “Hak”, we will start projects in the next two villages — “Mirig” and “Hochants”.’ Those projects, like the work in “Hak”, will consist of restoring ancient churches ..., alongside development and infrastructure projects for the current resettlers there. ‘After these two villages, there will be another two, and it will go on for the entire area.’

13. Telethon 2009: President Sargsyan launches fund-raising for pan-Armenian charity with Moscow reception, 27 October 2009ⁿ

On 25 October, the President of the Republic of Armenia and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the All-Armenian Hayastan Fund, Serzh Sargsyan, hosted a fund-raising reception in the framework of the annual Telethon 2009, reports the presidential press service. The event took place at the Ararat Park Hayat Hotel in Moscow and was attended by over 80 entrepreneurs of the Armenian descent. The money raised will be used in the programmes aimed at the development of “Shushi”. Addressing our compatriots present at the reception, the President of Armenia said: ‘As you know, the annual fund-raising of the All-Armenian Hayastan Fund, which is often called the “national pledge”, has

^l See www.panarmenian.net/eng/society/news/34308/Birth_rate_is_5_times_the_death_rate_in_NKR_Kashatagh_region.

^m See www.asbarez.com/70860/tufenkian-foundation-unveils-new-kashatagh-initiative/.

ⁿ Available from www.armenianow.com/hy/node/10716.

commenced. This fund-raising is conducted for the “Shushi” development programmes — for the “Shushi” that was one of the educational and cultural centres of Eastern Armenia, the “Shushi” ... I urge you to participate generously in this fund-raising as our benefactors and Maecenases have been doing for hundreds of years. Whatever we give will never be more than the blood that given by those who liberated “Shushi”. Let’s rise to their sacred deed.’

14. Prime Minister of Armenia calls on government members to personally contribute to recovery of “Shushi”, 26 November 2009^o

Prime Minister of Armenia Tigran Sargsyan called on the government members to personally contribute to the recovery of the town of “Shushi”, the Prime Minister said at Thursday’s government session. He recalled that an annual International Fundraising Telethon of Hayastan All Armenian Fund will be held on November 26 in Los Angeles (USA), and the major part of the funds gathered will be directed to recovery of “Shushi” ... ‘Recovery of Shushi is a matter of national dignity for us. All of us present here have to take part in the donation and inspire our relatives and friends by the personal example in order to ensure wide participation. My family and I will also take part in this donation and make a contribution’, Sargsyan said.

15. Armenian officials told to donate to Karabakh, 26 November 2009^p

Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan urged his ministers and other senior government officials on Thursday to actively participate in a Diaspora-backed annual fund-raising event organized by a pan-Armenian charity to finance infrastructure projects in Nagorno-Karabakh.

16. Knights send \$425,000 in medical supplies to Armenia, 24 March 2010^q

“Berdzor” is better equipped, with eight doctors, five nurse practitioners, a midwife and 10 nurses. In “Kovsakan” ... the “government” plans to build a large clinic ...

17. Russian Armenians fund “Shushi” streets renovation, 26 March 2010^r

With its recently initiated reconstruction of the “Garegin Nzhdeh” and “Alec Manoogian” streets, “Shushi’s” two main thoroughfares, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund has begun to restore the city’s economic and social infrastructures. The street revitalization project is being realized through contributions made by the Russian-Armenian community during Telethon 2009. Following the construction of sewage, water delivery and drainage systems, the streets and sidewalks (about 950 metres) will be paved and refurbished, and lightposts will be installed throughout. The project will be completed with the installation of 1.5-metre-wide lawns separating the streets from the sidewalks. ‘Prior to the launch of this project, the people of “Shushi” no longer believed that things would improve in their city,’ said Grigori Avanesyan, director of the “Shushi Administration’s Urban Development and Architecture Department’. ‘There is a great deal of bustle in this part of town.

^o See www.nkrusa.org/news/daily_news.php?id=1670.

^p See www.azatutyun.am/content/article/1888788.html.

^q See www.mirrorspectator.com/?p=3175.

^r See www.reporter.am/go/article/2010-03-26-russian-armenians-fund-shushi-streets-renovation.

Residents frequently use the telephone station and the bank or visit the cultural centre, whereas up till now the streets remained in a terrible state.’ “Alec Manoogian Street” is also home to the fire station and the much-visited, 1847-built “Hovhannes Mkrtych Church”, better known as the “Green Church” because of the colour of its dome. ‘This year our main goal is to implement a number of projects aimed at helping “Shushi” stand on its feet,’ said Ara Vardanyan, executive director of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. ‘I hope that our revitalization efforts will go a long way in strengthening “Shushi” residents’ bond with their city, and not be limited to the Fund initiatives only’.

18. United States representative Frank Pallone praises Armenia Fund’s humanitarian efforts, 7 April 2010^s

Los Angeles — Congressman Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, visited the Armenia Fund United States Western Region offices on Monday, 29 March, and met with its board of directors and staff. Armenia Fund United States Western Region Chair Ara Aghishian welcomed Congressman Pallone and thanked him for taking his time and visiting the Fund’s office. ‘I want to express my appreciation to the Congressman for his continued support of Armenia as well as for spearheading increased levels of humanitarian aid to Armenia and “Artsakh”, stated Aghishian. Congressman Pallone congratulated the Armenia Fund for hosting a successful Telethon during 2009 that raised nearly \$16 million for the reconstruction of the cradle of Armenian civilization, the heroic town of “Shushi”. He commended the humanitarian and developmental efforts of the Fund, specifically its infrastructure projects in Armenia’s and “Artsakh’s” remote borderline villages that have been bringing a positive change to the lives of tens of thousands for the past 18 years ... Armenia Fund, Inc., is a non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation established in 1994 to facilitate large-scale humanitarian and infrastructure development assistance to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Since 1991, the Armenia Fund has rendered more than \$190 million in development aid to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia Fund, Inc. is the United States Western Region affiliate of the “Hayastan” All-Armenian Fund, tax identification number 95-4485698.

19. Armenia: the governmental delegation of Armenia has visited “Shushi” city, 13 April 2010^t

The governmental delegation of the Republic of Armenia, led by Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan, visited the city of “Shushi” as part of a three-day working visit to the “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic”. As reported, the inaugural computer class was held at the senior school named by Muratsana, and the heads of the governments of the Armenian states, Tigran Sargsyan and Ara Arutyunyan, presided over the official ceremony. The class was provided with computers donated by the government of Armenia at a cost of about 3 million drams. The Prime Minister of Armenia has become personally familiar with technical possibilities in this regard. Completed and planned building recovery projects in “Shushi” were subsequently discussed in the “Shushi” centre for arts, crafts and tourism. Emphasis was placed on the building programmes carried out by the “Hayastan” All-Armenian Fund. Cabinet members and governors of Armenia accompanied the Prime Minister of Armenia, Tigran Sargsyan, in the framework of the three-day working visit to “NKR”.

^s See www.asbarez.com/79030/u-s-rep-frank-pallone-praises-armenia-funds-humanitarian-efforts/.

^t See www.kavkazweb.net/news/news.cgi?action=view&nid=01&yy=2010&mm=4&dd=13&message_id=12711710698691ZeuN5DxGZvtmy.

20. “Shushi” renaissance: Foundation intends to restore “Shushi’s” fame by turning it into cultural centre of Armenians, 27 April 2010^u

For 10 years, Bakur Karapetyan, a writer and a photographer with more than 45 years of experience, has been developing the idea of creating a National Art Gallery of Photography in “Shushi”. The photos displayed in his dream gallery will be collected from Armenians from all corners of the world to give a true picture of cultural and social life of the Armenian people, the cities and towns they lived, architectural monuments they built and wars and trials they endured. ““Shushi” was crowned as a hero city, a symbol of victory ... The photos will save it from oblivion,’ says Karapetyan. The “Shushi” non-governmental organization founded by Karapetyan makes appeals through its website (www.shoushi.am) for people to contribute to the foundation of the gallery by providing photos ... Karapetyan says that a building in “Shushi” could be turned into a gallery if he can find \$300,000 for renovation and equipment ... However, founding the gallery is not the final goal of the photographer. He says it is just a small part of his ambitious plan to turn “Shushi” into a nationwide cultural, educational and tourism centre, to make it more than a town which was crowned as a symbol of Armenian victory. The foundation wants to see “Shushi” become a centre of pan-Armenian culture and research. ‘Shushi was crowned as a hero city, a symbol of victory. It deserves much more attention than it gets now’ ... Even after the Karabakh war, “Shushi” preserved most of its monuments, dating from a time when it was a noted publishing and cultural centre. The “Shushi” foundation, together with professors and students from the Yerevan Engineering University, carried out architectural research in “Shushi”.

^u See http://armenianow.com/arts/7182/shushi_renaissance_foundation_int.