

ARMENIANS TODAY

PUBLICATION OF RA MINISTRY OF DIASPORA

108

Editorial

Turkey needs moral support of Armenian community of Istanbul

RA Ministry of Diaspora

Arevik Petrosyan: “With the help of my art I would like to voice the idea of Armenians uniting round their homeland”

Editorial



Turkey needs moral support of Armenian community of Istanbul

2011-04-02

Turkey has truly decided to improve its image in the eyes of Europe and the world in general. Despite the fact that nationalists call for the Erdogan government to abandon plans of joining the EU and direct its eyes to the East,

Ankara continues the policy of “appeasement” of minorities.

In particular this applies to the Armenian community of Istanbul, which on the eve of parliamentary elections, scheduled for June 12, can provide essential support for the Justice and Development Party (AKP). This will be more of a moral support, as the votes of the community are too small in quantity to change the election results. The developments in the Arab world, where tribal relations seem to be dying out, have multiplied the problems of Ankara. It is one thing to advance Neo-Ottomanism, and another to restrain the Arabs and bring them back into the New Ottoman Empire. For Prime Minister Erdogan this is an almost impracticable problem, especially because he has to get ready for the elections. The main enemy - the Republican People’s Party (CDH), led by Kemal Kilicdaroglu, can seriously oust the AKP. This, in its turn, will put an end to the one-party parliament. However, most likely, Erdogan will prove lucky this time and will win the elections through bribery and flirtation with various political forces. Amendments to the Constitution provide for election of the president by popular vote, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan is seriously thinking of that only. However, Turks who believe in the AKP do not really want to see Erdogan at the post of the president, mainly because of his impulsive nature. Apparently, the Turkish premier wants to be no caliph. What he really desires is to become a second Ataturk, and to achieve his goal Erdogan is ready for almost anything, with a few exceptions: the spirit of Ataturk, unrivalled

in Turkey, pressures and will long be pressuring Erdogan as well as all other Turkish politicians.

But let us revert to the Armenian question, which has been haunting the Ottomans for several centuries. Present-day Turkey took the path of sultans, who used to appoint Grand Vizier from the Christian population, including Armenians (islamized, naturally). The latest example is nomination of ethnic Armenian Daron Acemoglu as the new Turkish Ambassador to France. Acemoglu is currently Professor of Applied Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He also leads a team of specialists that were twice nominated for the Nobel Prize for economic research.

The other day Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told a conference in Brussels that Turkey does not divide countries into friends and enemies. “We have friends and potential friends. Armenia is a potential friend to Turkey,” Davutoglu said. On March 3, the State Council of Turkey adopted a decision allowing Turkish citizen of Armenian descent Leo Suren Halepli to work in the Turkish government. Presently Halepli works in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. There is no doubt that the new officials will battle for the interests of Ankara better than the Turks themselves. One can say for sure that the current assignment and the coming ones will prove excellent PR-campaign on the way to Europe.

RA Ministry of Diaspora



Arevik Petrosyan: “With the help of my art I would like to voice the idea of Armenians uniting round their homeland”

2011-04-01

-You’ve suggested a brilliant idea. What’s the motive and subject matter of the venture?

-The Armenian Genocide consists not only in the pain of loss, sorrow and victims, but also in migration of Armenians from their homeland. Armenians seemed to be cut off from their roots and historical homeland. They spread all over the world, but were able to preserve their identity, language and religion. This is a unique gift of ours, of our ancient nation. As a female art critic, with the help of my art I would like to voice the idea of Armenians uniting round their homeland. The 12 paintings to be created within the framework of this project are going to represent the very idea of unity. There is to be little improvisation in these works. The subject must be perceptible and clear to the audience. I’m going to sacrifice the series “Relics from Armenia” to the implementation of this idea. This action carries several ideas: it is the attitude of a female artist to violence and brutality, the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide victims through art and prayers, a call for unity and, finally, a gift from Armenia to the Diaspora.

-Are the images going to have separate headings?

-The twelve works shall not have separate headings. They will all be made in a unique style, considered a new direction in art – organic glass overlaid with silver and gold. Keeping to the rules and trends of medieval miniature, the collection will, nevertheless, be given a new interpretation, presenting a unique synthesis of the old and new. Each work will present one line from the Lord’s Prayer, such as “Our Father, who art in heaven”, “Hallowed be thy name”, “Thy Kingdom come”, and so on. Thus, the series of these 12 works will make the Prayer. It is a kind of call to pray together and, thus, propagandizes the idea of togetherness. The collection will first be exhibited in Yerevan at the opening ceremony of the exhibition, then, as pieces of consecrated bread, will be given to 11 Diaspora communities as a gift from Homeland. One of the works will be kept in Armenia, as a symbol.

-When and how do you plan to have the presentation?

-On April 4 we’ll have the first exhibition for a close circle, with participation of the RA Minister of Diaspora Affairs. On this day we’ll decide which Armenian communities will receive each of these paintings. Let me thank RA Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan for her backing this idea and undertaking.

The main presentation will come before April 24. The opening ceremony is expected to be held in the evening. Candles and lighters together with the text of the Lord’s Prayer will be attached to the invitations, so that the invitees, gathered at the entrance, can light the candles and join the Prayer at the sign of the clergyman. Komitas String Quartet will be entertaining the guests outside. Then, in the silence, there will come out the words of the Lord’s Prayer that will drive away the darkness and unite everyone. Prayer, in general, is a powerful means to bring people together.