



## Republic of Armenia - Diaspora Cooperation



### Republic of Armenia- Diaspora Cooperation: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow Conference

On the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration of the Republic of Armenia and the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Haigazian University, in cooperation with the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Diaspora, Haigazian University and Yerevan State University, the “Armenia-Diaspora Cooperation: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” conference took place at Haigazian University in Beirut from September 5 to September 7, 2011.

The official opening of the conference took place on Monday, September 5, 2011. The speakers at the official opening session were the Ambassador of the Armenian Republic in Lebanon, HE Mr. Ashod Kocharian, the President of Haigazian University, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, the President of the Yerevan State University, Rector Prof. Aram Simonian and the Minister of Diaspora, Dr. Hranoush Hagopian.

Among the capacity audience present were Rev. and Mrs. Mgrditch Karagoezian, Archbishops Kegham Khacherian and Vartan Ashkarian, Minister General Panos Manjian, Minister and Mrs. Vrej Sabounjian, MP and Mrs. Serj Toursakissian, MP Jean Oghassapian, MP Hagop Pakradouni, MP Shant Chinchinian, MP Sebouh Kalpakian, and numerous political, academic and community leaders and guests.

During the first session, Tuesday, September 6, 2011 (moderator Dr. Arda Ekmekji) Minister Hranoush Hagopian spoke on the governmental policies regarding the promotion of Armenia-Diaspora cooperation. Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian discussed the educational aspect of Armenia-Diaspora cooperation and Rector Prof. Simonian discussed the Armenological aspect of this cooperation.

During the next session (moderator Armen Urneshlian) Dr. Razmig Panossian elaborated on the theoretical aspects, concerns and proposals regarding the Armenia-Diaspora cooperation, whereas Dr. Edward Melkonian spoke about the political aspects of the first twenty years of Armenia-Diaspora relations.

During the third session (moderator Baruyr Aghbashian) Dr. Prof. Yuri Avedissian discussed the role of the educational institutions in the Armenian Republic related to the Armenian Diaspora and stressed that the current cooperation could and should be furthered. The second speaker, Dr. Serj Srabionyan, gave a brief picture of the Lebanese Armenian literature.

On Wednesday, September 7, 2011, during the fourth session, (moderator Dr. Zaven Messerlian) Dr. Mher Hovanissian highlighted the current challenges of the websites dedicated to Armenian Studies within the context of Armenia-Diaspora cooperation. Next, Mr. Shahan Kandaharian spoke on the difficulties Lebanese Armenian media faced regarding the Armenia-Diaspora cooperation. During the second session of the day (moderator Dr. Anshalouys Topalian) Ishkhan Chiftchian presented the differences between the Armenia and Diaspora identities and the means and modes to reach a common ground. Dr. Antranik Dakessian concluded with a discussion regarding the integration of Armenians from Armenia into the Lebanese Armenian community.

Discussions and debates followed each of the sessions. It was recommended that further investigation and discussions are needed to clarify existing diversities in defining and stating certain relevant concepts and the ways in addressing them; such as the concept of fatherland, identity and integration. Eventually it was suggested that such conferences are the adequate venue to discuss and debate about such topics and after extensive presentations and discussions to reach conclusions, which take into consideration diverse peculiarities of the Republic of Armenia and the Diaspora.

The participants of the conference drew the following resolution: “We, the participants of the conference assure that the Yerevan State University and the Haigazian University have an exceptional role to play in the Armenia-Diaspora educational and pedagogical cooperation field, especially in the preparation of Armenian leaders and professionals, with the support of the Diaspora Ministry of Armenia.

“It is hoped that the issues that were discussed in the conference are taken into consideration in the future plans of the Yerevan State University Diaspora Research Center and the Armenian Diaspora Research Center of Haigazian University” the resolution concluded.

**Source-<http://www.haigazian.edu.lb/NewsEvents/Pages/default.aspx?NewsID=378>**