

DELEGATION OF GLENDALE GHAPAN SISTER CITY  
ASSOCIATION AND GLENDALE ADVENTIST MEDICAL CENTER  
VISIT GHAPAN, ARMENIA

**Delegation returns from 6 day tour of Armenia learning firsthand about the healthcare system there, meeting with government officials.**

**GLENDALE, CA** – The Glendale Ghapan Sister City Association hosted its second delegation to Armenia which included Scott Reiner, CEO of Glendale Adventist Medical Center (GMAC), Dr. Carl Ermshar, Larry Zarian, GAMC Governing Board Member and former Glendale Mayor, along with Glendale Ghapan Sister City Association Board members Artin Manoukian, Ara Avedikian and Glendale resident and philanthropist Dr. Alber Karamanoukian who visited Armenia from September 10 – 16 to better familiarize themselves with the current healthcare system there and establish ties with the hospital in Ghapan, Glendale’s Sister City.

During the 6-day visit, the delegation had an opportunity to visit hospitals and cultural landmarks in Yerevan, Armenia’s capital, Ghapan and in Stepanakert, Nagorno Karabakh’s capital and Shushi.

The delegation met with senior government officials Hovik Abrahamyan, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, Dr. Norayr Davidyan, Minister of Health as well Aghavan Vardanyan, Minister of Social Services. The government officials provided the visiting guests an overview of Armenia’s system of governance.

Also while in Yerevan, the delegation had an opportunity to visit the Medical Institute of Yerevan, the state run medical school and the new Nairi Hospital, a privately run hospital with modern equipment. Another hospital toured by the delegation was the St. Nerses Hospital that is operated under the auspices of St. Echmiadzin Church and met with Board of Trustees Director Sevak Avakyan.

The delegation then traveled to Ghapan where they were warmly greeted and received by the Mayor of Ghapan flanked by his staff at City Hall. The Ghapan Mayor, Mr. Armen Karapetyan, who recently had visited Glendale and had met with Scott Reiner, proudly showcased a wall of photographs and memorabilia amassed from Glendale and dedicated in City Hall to the ongoing projects and cultural and educational exchange between the Sister Cities of Ghapan and Glendale.

As part of its main mission of the trip, the delegation then toured the Ghapan hospital, including its pediatrics and maternity wards that the GGSCA has undertaken to modernize and renovate as one of its major projects. The delegates had an opportunity to see firsthand the daily operation of the hospital, the conditions of the facilities and outmoded equipment used and

interaction of hospital staff with patients. At the end of their tour, the group held a press conference with local media where they discussed expressed their willingness cooperate and to engage in exchange between the sister cities and hospitals. The delegation also shared their impressions and answered the press corps' questions.

Thereafter, the delegation headed to Nagorno Karabakh where they met with President Arkady Ghoukassian and the Minister of Health.

Also part of their itinerary, the delegation had an opportunity absorb the myriad of historical treasures such as the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, Khorvirap, the tomb of the national hero, Karekin Njdeh, Kantsazar Monastery, Garni and Gheghart, Nigol Touman and Ghazanchetzotz museums in effort to better familiarize themselves with the history, culture and people of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

Glendale resident Larry Zarian had last visited Armenia over 20 years ago. He recounted his visit to now a democratic Armenia two decades later with great enthusiasm. "I saw a tremendous difference. I saw vibrance; I saw energy. I saw people forging ahead who are happy and working," said Zarian. Continuing about his impressions with Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, Zarian added, "I was impressed with Stepanakert and Yerevan. I was surprised and extremely happy to see how this little country can forge ahead in spite of difficulties with its neighbors and especially after 75 years under communist rule." Referring to the trip as successful, Zarian indicated that the Glendale Medical Adventist, Chief of Staff and its governing board intend to do as much as they can for some of the hospitals which are in dire need of help.

Glendale Ghapan Sister City Association president Artin Manoukian echoed Zarian's sentiments about the trip's success. "It was a great trip. We accomplished a great deal in a short period of time. I believe we strengthened the ties Glendale and Ghapan share and we hope to work on various cultural, educational and mutually beneficial projects for hospitals in both cities in the near future." Referring to Mr. Reiner's and Dr. Ermshar's visit, Manoukian added, "understanding where a large segment of their patients come from will better help Glendale Adventist Medical Center better serve its patient population."

---

GGSCA is a non-profit organization that aims to foster goodwill and understanding through cultural, educational, economic cooperation between the people of Glendale and Ghapan. The GGSCA was established through the joint effort of the Armenian National Committee of Glendale, the City of Glendale, and the City of Ghapan, to help cultivate economic cooperation and cultural exchanges between the two cities. Glendale City Council passed a resolution recognizing Ghapan as a Sister City in December of 2002. GGSCA has identified three areas of focus in Ghapan: schools, healthcare and community infrastructure. For more information or to contribute to GGSCA, please contact (818) 828-8882 or email at [info@glendale-ghapan.org](mailto:info@glendale-ghapan.org)