



PERMANENT MISSION OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS



WOMEN IN STATE-BUILDING

EQUAL

MEANINGFUL

EMPOWERING

EXHIBITION DEDICATED
TO THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY
OF ARMENIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN
THE UNITED NATIONS

Ancient and medieval Armenian sources identify many strong and epic female characters who are independent in making choices in life and prove themselves in stories of glory, courage, struggle and resolve.



ANAHIT
ԱՆԱՀԻՏ

Historians and scribes have identified Goddess Anahit with her Greek counterparts Aphrodite or Artemis. To Armenians, she is Anahit, the vivifier of the nation, as well as the symbol of chastity, motherhood and wisdom, featured prominently on Armenian banknotes, coins and stamps.
Currently, the head of the bronze gilded statue of the goddess is on display at the British Museum.



Goddess Anahit
Fragments of a bronze Statue dated 1st century BC



Tsovinar
Sculpture in Yerevan

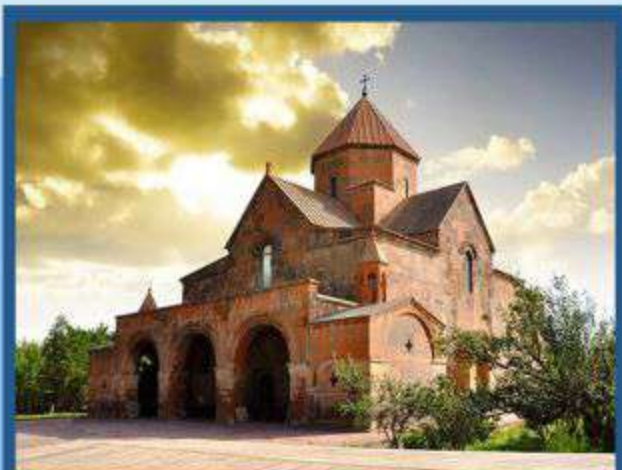
TSOVINAR
ԾՈՎԻՆԱՐ

Tsovinar is the central female character in the Armenian folk epic “Daredevils of Sassoun”, also known as the story of David of Sassoun - a poem dating back to the 9th century, which follows the story of a family of four generations. The characters of each generation perform heroic exploits in the face of extraordinary challenges, encapsulating the identity of the Armenian people and their continued struggle for freedom and faith over the span of the historic events chronicled in the poem.

Women have played an important part in the history of the Armenian Church, as epitomized by the sacrifice of Christian maidens Gayane and Hripsime in 301 AD, venerated as the earliest saints and martyrs of Armenia. Women participated in the spiritual and intellectual mission of the Church, with its millennia-old tradition of women deacons, having contributed to miniature painting, copying of manuscripts, translation and pedagogic work.

ST. GAYANE AND HRIPSIME

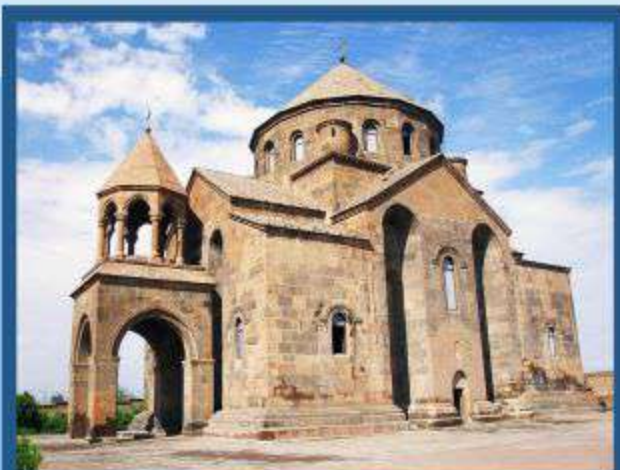
Սբ. ԳԱՅԱՆԵ ԵՎ ՀՌԻՓՍԻՄԵ



St. Gayane Church

7th century church in the city of Vagharshapat.

St. Gayane and St. Hripsime Churches are part of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites along with the Cathedral and Churches of Vagharshapat (Etchmiadzin) and the Archaeological Site of Zvartnots.



St. Hripsime Church

7th century church in the city of Vagharshapat. It is one of the oldest surviving churches in the country.

ST. SHUSHANIK

Սբ. ՇՈՒՇԱՆԻԿ

Shushanik, born Vardeni Mamikonian (440-475) - Christian Armenian woman who died defending her right to profess Christianity, subsequently venerated as martyr. Shushanik was a daughter of the Armenian noble and military leader Vardan Mamikonian.

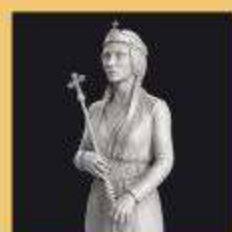


Հայ հայաստանի կառավարող
պաշտպանող
պաշտպանող



QUEEN ASHKHEN

ԱՇԽԵՆ ԹԱԳՈՒՀԻ



Queen of Armenia and wife of King Tiridates III of the Arsacid dynasty, Ashkhen was a significant figure in the Armenian history. As Tiridates III declared Christianity as state religion in 301 AD, Ashkhen supported the early church formation efforts by sponsoring construction of the Etchmiadzin Cathedral, the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, the center of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

King Tiridates III,
Queen Ashkhen and
Khosrovidukht

Work of the 17th
century muralist
Naghash Hovnatan.



Queen Zabel

by Vardges Sureniants, 1909

QUEEN ZABEL

ԶԱԲԵԼ ԹԱԳՈՒՀԻ

Queen regnant of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from 1219 until her demise in 1252, Zabel was the daughter of Levon II from the Rubenid dynasty, who significantly strengthened the kingdom placing it on equal footing with the other countries of the Eastern Mediterranean. Having succeeded her father to the throne, Queen Zabel became the first woman ruler of Cilicia, whose legacy is known for thriving commerce, culture and art.



այ հասլասար կանա
այ նշանակալի կա
այ հայ ազդեցիկ



MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN RECORD

Women's rights have notably been featured and emphasized in the works of the Armenian intellectuals and legal thinkers at different times in history.

DATASTANAGIRK - CODE OF LAWS (12TH CENTURY)



Medieval Armenian philosopher and priest Mkhitar Gosh was one of the earliest legal thinkers to offer codification of social and property rights of women. His seminal “Code of Laws” dated 1184 identifies a number of important provisions prohibiting forced marriages, violence against women, as well as those ensuring equal property rights for men and women, paving the way for more progressive legal writings and laws to be adopted in subsequent periods of history.

SNARE OF GLORY (18TH CENTURY)

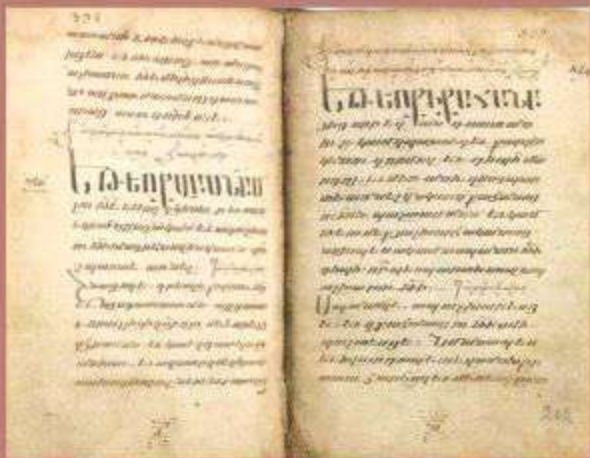


“Snare of glory” is scholarly regarded as one of the earliest attempts of drafting a state constitution. It was first published in Madras (nowadays Chennai), India in 1773, as a collection of laws (521 articles) to govern the future Armenian state. Numerous articles were devoted to issues of enlightenment, economy development and family relations. Education was to become obligatory for all citizens, without gender discrimination. The state was to provide for education and healthcare for orphans and the needy.

“As for those who commit abductions, let them take the woman and give her back to her father and mother. And they shall pay a fine for the dishonour.”

“If there be judgment of separation, let him give into his wife's possession all the property which the wife brought into the husband's house, and let him release her to marry another.”

(Datastanagirk, 1184)



“Each human individual, whether Armenian or of another ethnicity, whether male or female, born in Armenia or moved to Armenia from other countries, will live in equality and will be free in all their occupations. No one will have the right to lord over another person, whereas their manual labor shall be remunerated according to any other work, as required by the Armenian Law” (Snare of Glory, 1773)

հայկազուն կանայք
այք հայ նշանակալի
ազդեցիկ կանայք



EMANCIPATION

WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

EQUAL
MEANINGFUL
EMPOWERING

Development of female education promoted empowerment of women and their greater participation in public life.



Hripsimian Women's Gymnasium

A school for girls founded in 1850 in Yerevan. The curricula included Armenian, Russian, Persian, Mathematics, Geography and Handicraft. In 1866, subjects such as French, biology, aesthetics, painting, music were added. In 1917, the Hripsimian school had 526 students. In 1921, it switched to integrated schooling for girls and boys.

Elbis Gesaratsian and "Guitar" newspaper

First female Armenian journalist and editor of the Newspaper "Guitar", which ran in 1862-1863. The periodical invited women's contributions that enabled them to express their views and discuss issues, including women's rights, in a public forum read by both women and men. In her book titled "Letters to Armenian Educated Women's Foundation" (Նամականի առ ընթերցասեր հայուհիս) Elbis Gesaratsyan wrote on such issues as women's education, discrimination and equality between men and women.



"You may have often experienced women who more thoughtful, more foresighted and more hard-working than their husbands; but they knowingly and blindly succumb to men who do not know the right way to do something; because the woman should be a bird without a tongue and the man, even if he is a crow, he must sing and rule with pride. Yes, my sister, these are my thoughts. Our opinions should blossom. Capable persons should take this as a duty, should activate the sluggish brains in lawful ways, should be awake in holding on to her the freedoms and should be eager to educate ourselves and encourage other women to educate themselves. We should create reading rooms and societies and possess such knowledge addressing hearts and brains so that we take steps on the way of development and be counted as human beings."

Elbis Gesaratsian, "Letters", 1879.

հասկանալի կանայք
այս հայ նշանակալի
ագդեցիկ կանայք



EDUCATORS

WOMEN IN
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SRBUHI DUSSAB

ՍՐԲՈՒՀԻ ԴՅՈՒՍԱԲ
(1840-1901)



First Armenian female novelist and writer to address women's rights and equality. Together with Zabel Asadour, they made a project of an Armenian declaration of women's rights claiming for equality in all spheres. "Literature has more thorns for a woman than roses", she said.

"Armenian girls, your luster will not fade, but rather will shine even brighter, once, with your dainty feet, you bravely walk down the thorny path of life, leaving in those thorns the trace of your heroic footsteps. Imagine the glory you will feel when you devote your youth to brightening the gloomy home of your frail parents with glimmers of hope and filial love; when you ensure the future of your younger brother; or when you create a new, joyous world for tortured souls, where their days can pass peacefully. This is your responsibility; this is the product of your tireless efforts; this is a monument to your young soul."

article by Srбуhi Dussab, published in August, 1882, Translated by Jennifer Manoukian



In 2016, the postal services of Armenia released a stamp dedicated to Srбуhi Dussab

ZABEL (SIBIL) ASADUR

ԶԱԲԵԼ (ՍԻԲԻԼ) ԱՍԱԴՈՒՐ
(1863-1934)



Prominent feminist writer, poet and educator, who authored a textbook of modern Armenian grammar. She was one of the founders of the Society of Nation-Dedicated Armenian Women (Ազգանվեր հայուհյաց ընկերություն) - an organization that supported the construction, maintenance, and operation of girls schools.

She wrote textbooks that went through many reprints and remained in use in Armenian schools for decades. In her twilight years, she collected her short stories in a volume titled "Souls of Women" published in 1926.



INCENSE

BEFORE the altar burns the fragrant incense;
Softly the silver censer sways and bows;
The columned smoke goes up, the cross encircling,
And with a mist anoints the saints' white brows.
Infinite sighs of prayer and of entreaty
Under the vaults die slowly and are stilled;
Slowly the weeping flames of dim, faint tapers
Sigh, one by one, their eyes with pity filled.
Lo, a white veil, hard by the sacred column,
Trembles with sobs that shake a hidden frame;
In a white shadow wrapped, a heart is burning
Silently, like the incense, in a flame.
Out of the censer's heart the incense passes,
Winding it rises toward the ether's height.
Matter it was; the fire its life hath swallowed;
Now 'tis but fragrance filled with colored light.
So, too, the grieving woman's heart that burns there
Will not be freed from fetters and from fires
Until it melts, dissolves, etherealizes,
Wholly consumed by flames of pure desires.

Zabel Sibil Asadour, 1902
Translated by Alice Stone Blackwell

"Let's work to avoid being in debt with the nation and humankind, to make our sisters in the provinces get the light of education, to have the female gender have a place in humankind... Many people say and will say that you cannot succeed, however, which big work has succeeded in its first attempt; if we do not succeed, at least we will have set the foundations and someone else will perfect it..."

Zabel Asadour's speech at the
Society of Nation-Dedicated
Armenian Women

հայ հայկապետական
հայկապետական
հայ ազդեցիկ



INTELLECTUALS


WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

EQUAL
MEANINGFUL
EMPOWERING

Women became increasingly involved in movements that advocated for equality and women's rights, educating new generations and contributing to greater female presence in the Armenian public and cultural life.


ZABEL YESAYAN

ՀԱԲԵԼ ԵՍԱՅԱՆ
(1878-1943)



Writer, translator, one of the most influential figures of the Armenian women's movement. A graduate of the Sorbonne University, where she studied literature and philosophy, Zabel Yesayan was inspired by the French Romantic movement and the 19th century revival of the Armenian literature, becoming a prolific writer herself.

A street in Paris named after Zabel Yesayan on 8 March 2018 on the occasion of the International Women's Day.





SHUSHANIK KURGHINIAN

ՇՈՒՇԱՆԻԿ ԿՈՒՐԴԻՆԻԱՆ
(1876-1927)

Prominent feminist poet and public activist, whose progressive writings called for women's rights and empowerment.

I WANT TO LIVE

I Want to Live I want to live - but not a lavish life
Trapped in obscurity - indifferent and foolish,
Nor as an outright hostage of artificial beauty,
A frail creature - delicate and feeble, but equal to you - oh men - prosperous
As you are - powerful and headstrong - fit against calamities - ingenious in mind,
With bodies full of vigor.

I want to fight—first as your rival,
Standing against you with an old vengeance,
Since absurdly and without mercy you
Turned me into a vassal through love and force.
Then after clearing these disputes of my gender,
I want to fight against the agonies of life,
Courageously like you - hand in hand,
Facing this struggle to be or not.

Shushanik Kurghinian, 7 June 1907,
Translated by Shushan Avagyan

Հայ հասարակարկի կանայք հայ ազդեցիկ



WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT

The proclamation of the Republic of Armenia and restoration of independent statehood in 1918 brought new opportunities for women’s participation in public life. The Republic of Armenia of 1918-1920 was one of the first states to entitle women with the right to vote and to be elected.

Perchuhi Partizpanyan-Barseghyan

Պերճուհի Պարտիզպանյան-Բարսեղյան

(1886-1940)



Publicist, teacher, writer and humanitarian worker, member of Parliament of the First Armenian Republic. Founder and leader of a female union.

Katarina Zalyan-Manukyan

Կատարինա Հալյան-Մանուկյան

(1886-1965)



Politician, physician, member of Parliament of the First Armenian Republic. A committed humanitarian, worked to provide support to orphans, address social and educational needs.



Varvare Sahakyan

Վարվառե Սահակյան

(1873-1934)

Public figure, politician, member of Parliament of the First Armenian Republic. Active advocate for humanitarian issues, involved with aid organizations and the Armenian diaspora communities.

WOMEN IN ARMENIAN PARLIAMENT IN 2022



By 2022, the Armenian Parliament has achieved the record 35 percent of women in legislature - a major step towards advancing gender equality and women empowerment in politics.

հասկանալի կանայք
այս հայ նշանակալի
ազդեցիկ կանայք



DIPLOMATS

WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

EQUAL
MEANINGFUL
EMPOWERING



DIANA ABGAR ԴԻԱՆԱ ԱԲԳԱՐ (1859-1937)

Writer and humanitarian, Diana Abgar (Diana Anahit Aghabekian) was appointed as Armenia's diplomatic representative to Japan, being the first Armenian woman diplomat and one of the first women to have ever held diplomatic position in the 20th century.



In a letter dated 22 July 1920, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Armenia H.E. Hamazasp Ohanjanyan appointed Ms. Diana Abgar as Honorary Consul to Japan in recognition of her efforts "for defending the interests of the newly-born Fatherland and mitigating the conditions of our compatriots".



Diplomatic passport
of Diana Abgar (1920)



In 2020, the postal services of Armenia released a stamp dedicated to Diana Abgar as part of the annual "Armenian history" series.



այ հայաստան կանա
նշանակալի կա
նայր հայ ազդեցիկ



PERMANENT MISSION OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

DEFENDERS

WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

EQUAL
MEANINGFUL
EMPOWERING

Over 10 000 Armenian women served in the Soviet Armed Forces during World War II. As volunteers in the regular army and national militia troops, women served as snipers, military surgeons, communication personnel, pilots, tank crew members and in many other capacities.

SOFIA LALAYAN

ՍՈՖՅԱ ԼԱԼԱՅԱՆ
(1918-1944)



Military surgeon. Together with her sister Ruzanna joined Soviet Army during WWII. She was killed by airstrike in Leningrad while operating in the field hospital in 1944. She was awarded a medal “For the defense of Leningrad” posthumously.

RUZANNA LALAYAN

ՌՈՒԶԱՆՆԱ ԼԱԼԱՅԱՆ
(1919-2015)

Military surgeon. Joined the Leningrad national militia in 1941 to defend the city against Nazis. From August 13 to 18, during the battle for Sinyavin heights, she performed 97 surgeries for wounded Soviet soldiers. For her heroism she was awarded Order of Red Star and medal “For the defense of Leningrad”.



Group photo of women defenders of Leningrad in Yerevan's Victory Park, taken in 1970s.

հասկանալի կանայք
այդ հայ նշանակալի
ազդեցիկ կանայք



PERMANENT MISSION OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

DEFENDERS

WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

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GOHAR VARTANIAN

ԳՈՀԱՐ ՎԱՐԴԱՆՅԱՆ
(1926-2019)

Gohar Vartanian and her future husband Gevorg Vartanian helped prevent the Nazi attempt to assassinate leaders of Allied powers (Joseph Stalin, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill) during the Tehran Conference in November 1943. A prominent intelligence officer, decorated with orders of the Red Banner and the Order of the Patriotic War II degree.



Gohar and Gevorg Vartanian's story inspired creation of the iconic Soviet-French-Swiss film "Teheran 43" based on a book by Garegin Sevunts. The film features theme song "Une vie d'amour" by Charles Aznavour.



“MOTHER ARMENIA” MONUMENT



“Mother Armenia” (Մայր Հայաստան) is a monument resembling a female figure as a personification of Armenia. Erected in 1967 in Victory Park overlooking Armenia's capital Yerevan, the statue stands as a symbol of power, motherhood and peace and reminds viewers of the role that women have played in Armenia's history.

The prototype and inspiration of "Mother Armenia" - Genia Muradian.



հայկական կանայք
այդ հայ նշանակալի
ազդեցիկ կանայք h



REMOVING BARRIERS

WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

EQUAL
MEANINGFUL
EMPOWERING

Women had to work hard to claim their space and pave their way in occupations that traditionally had little female presence.



SILVA KAPUTIKYAN

ՍԻԼՎԱ ԿԱՊՈՒԿՅԱՆ
(1919-2006)

Writer and political activist, an influential intellectual, Silva Kaputikyan is recognized as "the leading poetess of Armenia".

Portrait of Silva Kaputikyan
by Martiros Saryan (1952)



MARIAM AND ERANUHI ASLAMAZYAN

ՄԱՐԻԱՄ ԵՎ ԵՐԱՆՈՒԻ ՀԻ ԱՍԼԱՄԱԶՅԱՆՆԵՐ



Sisters Mariam and Eranuhi Aslamazyan were renowned artists, who depicted women in their own distinctive styles, raising issues related to female identity and status in society. With their modernist approach, eclectic style, and vibrant international careers, the Aslamazyan sisters defied conventions in the male-dominated visual art world, with a thrust to represent the diversity of female subject at the core of their visual narratives.

Mariam
Aslamazyan
(1907-2006)



Eranuhi
Aslamazyan
(1910-1998)

AYTSEMNIK URARTU

ԱՅԾԵՄՆԻԿ ՈՒՐԱՐՏՈՒ
(1899-1974)



The soft volumes of the Aytsemnik Urartu's works create mild transitions of light and shadow, delicate contours and a stable composition as a whole. First woman to become professional sculptor in Armenia, she was indispensable in the establishment of the Union of Artists of Armenia. In 1960 Aytsemnik Urartu was awarded an honorary title of People's Artist of Soviet Armenia.



Aytsemnik Urartu
working on the bust of
celebrated Armenian
artist Martiros Saryan.



PERMANENT MISSION OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

CHAMPIONS

WOMEN IN
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ELINA DANIELIAN

ԷԼԻՆԱ ԴԱՆԻԵԼՅԱՆ
(born in 1978)

Chess grandmaster and six-time champion of Armenia, Elina Danielian became a grandmaster at the age of 16. She won several world and European youth championships. In 2021 Danielian became the winner of the European Individual Chess Championship.



WOMEN'S NATIONAL CHESS TEAM



Left to right: Elina Danielian, Lilit Mkrtchian, Lilit Galoyan and Maria Kursova.

Elina Danielian and Lilit Mkrtchian led the Armenian Women's National team to the victory in the European championship in 2003.

ZINAIDA SIMONYAN

ԶԻՆԱԻԴԱ ՍԻՄՈՆՅԱՆ
(1950-2012)

Sport shooter, 18 times champion of Soviet Union, 15 times European champion. In 1974 and in 1981 she won multiple gold medals in world championships. Zinaida Simonyan set 56 USSR, Europe and world records.



NAZELI (NAZIK) AVDALYAN

ՆԱԶԵԼԻ (ՆԱԶԻԿ) ԱՎԴԱԼՅԱՆ
(born in 1986)



Weightlifter, World (2009) and Two times European champion (2008, 2016). In April 2010, Avdalyan survived a car crash and suffered multiple bone fractures and a spine injury. After seven years of recovery, Avdalyan made a huge comeback at the 2016 European Championship winning two gold medals.

այ հասկանալի կամ
նշանակալի կամ
նայք հայ ազդեցիկ



PEACEKEEPERS

WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

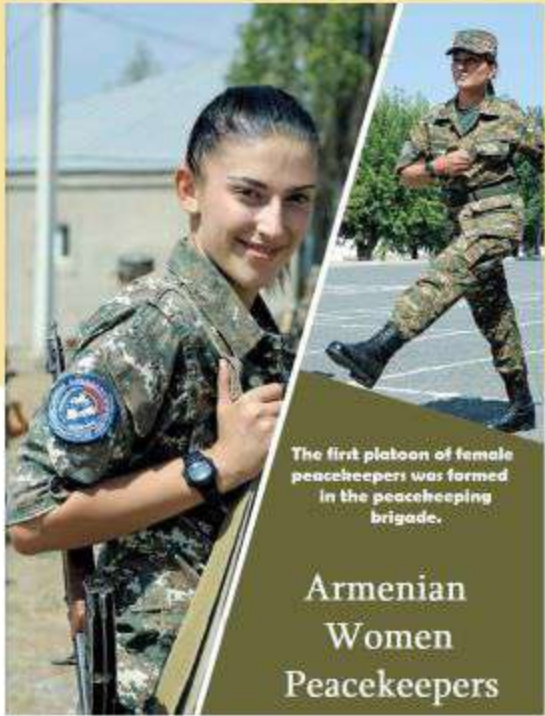
EQUAL
MEANINGFUL
EMPOWERING

Armenia is committed to increasing the involvement of women in peacekeeping as part of its security sector reform. The Armenian women peacekeepers are deployed in the UN mandated peacekeeping missions.



WOMEN IN PEACEKEEPING

In 2017, a women's platoon was established within the 12th Peacekeeping brigade of the Armenian Armed Forces. Women peacekeepers are deployed within the Armenian contingent in the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and other multinational peacekeeping missions.



այ հասկանալի կամ
նշանակալի կամ
հայ ազդեցիկ



INNOVATORS

WOMEN IN
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WOMEN IN IT SECTOR

Today, Armenia is home to over 900 ICT companies, with 40% ratio of women employed in the IT sector - twice above the world average.

Women comprise 50-60% of applicants for graduate studies in IT in Armenia.



As a leader of the "Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality" Action Coalition of the "Generation Equality" Forum, Armenia places high priority to the promotion of meaningful access of women and girls to digital technologies and universal digital literacy with a view to bridge the gender digital divide.

TUMO CENTER

ԹՈՒՄՈ ԿԵՆՏՐՈՆ



The TUMO Center for Creative Technologies is a free-of-charge educational program established in Armenia in 2011, made up of self-learning activities, workshops and project labs. Present in several regions of Armenia, TUMO model has expanding internationally with centers in Paris, Beirut, Moscow, Tirana and Berlin.



հայ հասկանալի կառավարող
հայ ազդեցիկ



AT THE UNITED NATIONS

WOMEN IN
STATE-BUILDING

EQUAL
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EMPOWERING

PRIORITIZING ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN GLOBALLY



On 2 March 1992, Armenia became member of the United Nations. Over the three decades of its membership, Armenia has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to multilateral cooperation for the protection and promotion of women's rights and achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women held in March 2020 adopted the Political Declaration in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.



Permanent Representative of Armenia Mher Margaryan, Chair of the 64th and 65th sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women

In March 2021, the 65th session of the CSW adopted Agreed Conclusions setting recommendations on the measures for full and equal participation of women in all areas of public life, including in the government and public sector.



"Equality is a universal value, and only strong commitments of governments and political willingness to implement and support international norms in gender equality can guarantee full enjoyment of Human Rights for all."

Zaruhi Batoyan, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia at the Event entitled "From Equal Rights to Equal Opportunities: Countering Discrimination Affecting Women and Girls", 12 March 2019

Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն
ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

