

## Adoptions illégales

Armenia's top intelligence agency—the National Security Service (NSS)—has launched a criminal investigation into reports of illegal international adoptions which allegedly took place between 2016 and 2018.

An NSS press release dated November 14 reveals that “two Armenian citizens used their connections at several government maternity hospitals and orphanages to organize the adoption of at least 30 infants” by families in Italy as well as the United States in what constitutes “a gross violation of Armenian law.”

This revelation, though shocking, was short on details, leading to the spread of macabre rumors concerning organ harvesting. Taking questions from journalists, Security Council Secretary Armen Grigoryan commented on these concerns. “No word at the moment on any organ trafficking, but we will keep you updated,” he replied.



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## Robertson, Fisk to Speak at Centennial Conference in New York

Jurist Geoffrey Robertson and journalist Robert Fisk are among the confirmed speakers at "Responsibility 2015," the international conference marking the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide, to be held on March 13-15, 2015, at New York's Marriott Marquis Hotel. Geoffrey Robertson is an international jurist, human rights lawyer, and academic. His latest book is *An Inconvenient Genocide: Who Remembers the Armenians?* In recent years, he has been particularly prominent in the defense of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. He has also represented author Salman Rushdie, and prosecuted General Augusto Pinochet. In 2008, he was appointed by United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon as a "distinguished jurist" member of the UN's Justice Council, which nominates and supervises UN judges. His memoir, *The Justice Game*, has sold over 150,000 copies.



Geoffrey Robertson

Robert Fisk is the Middle East correspondent of the independent newspaper. He holds numerous awards for journalism, including two Amnesty International UK Press Awards and seven British International Journalist of the Year awards. During the 30 years he has been reporting on the Middle East, he has covered every major event in the region, from the Algerian Civil War to the Iranian Revolution, from the hostage crisis in Beirut to the Iran-Iraq War, from the Russian invasion of Afghanistan to Israel's invasions of Lebanon, and from the Gulf War to the invasion and ongoing war in Iraq. His books include *The Great War for Civilization: The Conquest of the Middle East*.

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## Virginia Council of Churches Passes Genocide Resolution

RICHMOND, Va. — The Virginia Council of Churches on Nov. 6 unanimously approved a resolution calling for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide at its 70th Annual Meeting at Faith Community Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.



The Convention was attended by representatives of every Christian denomination in the Commonwealth, including representatives of the Baptist, Orthodox, Lutheran, Episcopal, and Catholic churches. Rev. Dr. Jonathan Burton, executive director of the Virginia Council of Churches, was instrumental in forwarding this action. For many years, he has participated and joined in activities of the St. James Armenian Orthodox Church community of Richmond. He is currently an honorary member of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide Committee.

After the presentation of the Resolution by Fedos C. Bardsarian and Sona K. Pomefey, who represented the St. James Armenian Church, there were extensive questions and responses regarding this recognition. Several church representatives asked about reparations being a part of the resolution. After debating this issue, the Armenian representatives indicated that this would be part of the next phase of the program. Several in the Assembly spoke about their knowledge of the Armenian Genocide and expressed the need for the Christian Churches of Virginia to stand firm in their condemnation, and to pray for remembrance.

The assembly wished to affirm that this was an act that the public needs to be educated about. Some indicated that if perhaps this first act of genocide had been addressed properly in 1915, other

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## ANCA-ER Celebrates Grassroots Activism at 8th Annual Banquet



Renowned lawyer Robert Margenhan, accepting this year's prestigious ANCA-ER Freedom Award from Near East Foundation Chairman Shant Mardirosian

NEW YORK—Armenian Americans from throughout the Eastern U.S. gathered at the Ritz Carlton New York, Battery Park on Sun., Dec. 7, in a salute to expanded grassroots activism and to honor civic, political, and

community leaders who have worked tirelessly to advance the Armenian Cause.

Honorees for the evening included renowned lawyer Robert Margenhan and the Margenhan family, who received this

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## Der Ghougassian Discusses Bolivia's Recognition of the Armenian Genocide

By RUPEN JANBAZIAN



Khatchik Der Ghougassian

On Nov. 26, the two Houses of the Bolivian Parliament (the Plurinational Legislative Assembly of Bolivia) unanimously approved a measure recognizing the Armenian Genocide. The resolution expresses solidarity with the Armenian cause and condemns "all denialist policy regarding the Genocide and crimes against humanity suffered by the Armenian nation."

In an exclusive interview with the Armenian Weekly, Khatchik Der Ghougassian, professor of international relations at Universidad de San Andrés in Argentina, discussed the passage of the resolution and outlined the potential for strengthened Armenian-South American relations in the coming years.

Rupen Janbazian: The Buenos Aires-based "Agencia Prensa Armenia" reported that on Nov. 26, 2014, the two houses of the Bolivian Parliament unanimously approved measures to recognize the Armenian Genocide with the approval of the Bolivian Foreign Ministry. It is interesting that this resolution passed in Bolivia, a country with no major Armenian population, or even any Armenian diplomatic representation. How did this resolution come about? Was the greater South American-Armenian community involved in any way?

Khatchik Der Ghougassian: Not only does an organized Armenian community not exist in Bolivia, but I also doubt if there are

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