

# Agenda 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting

## INFORMATION

**Yerevan** (Armenian: Երևան or Երևան; sometimes written as Erevan; former names include Erebuni and Erivan) (population: 1,088,300 (2004 estimate)) is the largest city and capital of Armenia. It is situated on the **Hrazdan River**, at 40°10' N 44°31' E, and is the administrative, cultural, and industrial center of the country. The history of Yerevan

### Geography and climate

Yerevan is located in Eastern Armenia in the North-Eastern part of the **Ararat Valley**. The upper part of the city is surrounded by mountains on three sides while to the south it descends to the banks of the **river Hrazdan**, a tributary of the **river Arax** that divides the city into two within a picturesque canyon. The elevation of the city ranges between 900 to 1,300 meters over the sea level, displaying a 400 meter disparity between its lowest and highest points. The climate of Yerevan is relatively continental with a dry, hot summer and a cold and short winter. The temperature of the hottest month of August reaches to 40 degrees Celsius and the coldest month of January to -15 degrees Celsius. The amount of precipitation is small and amounts to annually to about 350 mm.

### Culture

**Yerevan** is a leading industrial, cultural, and scientific centre in the Caucasus region. As a centre of Armenian culture, Yerevan is the site of Yerevan State University (1919), the Armenian Academy of Sciences, a historical museum, an opera house, a music conservatory and several technical institutes. The Matenadaran archives hold a rich collection of valuable ancient Armenian, Greek, Syrian, Hebrew, Roman and Persian manuscripts. Yerevan has several large public libraries, a number of museums and theaters, botanical gardens and zoos. It is also at the heart of an extensive rail network and is a major trading centre for agricultural products. In addition, industries in the city produce metals, machine tools, electrical equipment, chemicals, textiles and food products.

### Useful information

#### Electricity

Travelers from the US will need a converter for household items brought with them as the standard voltage in Armenia is 220V (as opposed to 110V standard in the US). Furthermore, the voltage, at times - albeit infrequently - deviates from the standard, so travelers should also bring (or buy when in Armenia) a surge protector for computers and other electronic appliances. Electric outlets in Armenia use European plugs with 2 round pins. In addition to a voltage converter, you will need outlet plug adaptors, which are available at many electronic shops in Yerevan.

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## Currency

The **Armenian national currency is the dram**. Paper notes are issued in denominations of **500, 1.000, 5.000, 10.000, 20.000** and **50.000** Dram. All new **Armenian Dram** banknotes have been printed on high quality 100 % cotton fibre paper. Visible and invisible fibres for reasons of security are interwoven in the paper. The 50.000 dram banknote, in circulation since 2001, commemorates the 1700 anniversary of the adoption of Christianity in Armenia as a state religion, the first country to do so. Coins replace all banknotes less than 500 dram (10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500). Foreign bank notes can be exchanged at local banks and at exchange counters.

There is no limitation on the amount of money exchanged.

## Telephone

There are three telephone companies in Armenia: **Beeline**, which holds all fixed-line and 30% of cellular networks, and **VivaCell-MTS**, which holds 70% of cellular networks, and **Orange**. Beeline has around 550,000 mobile subscribers, and VivaCell-MTS has around 1,750,000, and Orange has around 250,000.

In Armenia, telecommunications investments have made major inroads in modernizing and upgrading the outdated telecommunications network inherited from the Soviet era. Currently, the system is 100% privately owned and undergoing modernization and expansion. Additionally, the mobile-cellular services monopoly terminated in late 2004 and a second provider began operations in mid-2005.

## Calling Armenia from abroad

From abroad to Yerevan, marzes, mobile network, Nagorno-Karabakh fixed tel. network and Nagorno-Karabakh mobile network:

- + 374 + Destination Code + Subscriber Number (to Yerevan, regions (marzes))
- + 374 + Mobile Network Code + Mobile Subscriber Number (to mobile network)
- + 374 + 47 + Subscriber Number (to NK fixed telephone network)
- + 374 + 97 + Subscriber Number (to NK mobile network)

## Calling from Armenia

From Yerevan, marzes, mobile network and Nagorno-Karabakh to abroad:

**00 + Country Code + Destination Code + Subscriber Number**

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### Yerevan City Center

Most of tourist Yerevan is concentrated in the centre. The centre is very compact and easily walkable, with endless dining and entertainment options. The rest of the city is mostly sleeping or business quarters, so a typical tourist will not have much incentive to leave the centre.

**Kentron, Centre City or Downtown** - is central Yerevan, locally called as *kentron* ("Kentron" is the romanized way of writing the Greek word "κέντρον" which means "centre") or just *kaghak* (meaning 'the city'). This is the heart of Yerevan and indeed Armenia. Though Kentron's architecture is diverse, ranging from Belle Epoque to Soviet Panel blocks, the great majority of the centre is in Beaux-Arts tradition. Downtown Yerevan follows Tamanyan's plan for a circular city with two hubs - grand Republic Square, and the more elegant and soft Opera district (Opera house, Freedom Square and the Swan Lake Park). The two are linked with newly-constructed pedestrian-only Northern Avenue. The Main Avenue (standard South European Corso) is still under construction (for the last 60 years, although on a greater scale during the last couple of years) and will eventually reach the hill on which the historical Kond district rests. Kentron is also home to the University City, where the campuses of State University, Medical University, Engineering University, Agricultural University, Economics University, Pedagogical and some other universities come together in one big group. Virtually all of the museums, hotels and popular places to eat and drink are in Kentron, so most visitors will probably not venture much past it.