A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AMONG EMERGING DEMOCRACIES

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Category: Opinions

By Razmik Panossian PhD

Presentations at the Roundtable Discussion: Policy Directions in Post Election Armenia, Montreal, 20 June 2008

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Viken L. Attarian PE MBA was the moderator at the Public Roundtable Discussion dedicated to **Policy Directions in Post-Election Armenia**. It was sponsored by the Armenian Women's Association of Canada and was held in Montreal on the 20th of June 2008. Mr. Attarian skillfully facilitated the evening introducing the panelists and the subjects. Following the presentations by the participants he tactfully moderated a lively discussion between them, and afterwards between the panelists and the public.

An audiovisual online version of the full evening will be available to the public in about two weeks. Meanwhile an outline of Prof. Onnig Beylerian's talk and excerpts from Prof. Sima Aprahamian's notes posted in Keghart.com may furnish an idea about the subjects that they covered. Khatoune Temisjian Bedrossian PhD, Hagop Angaladian and Dikran Abrahamian submitted powerpoint slides. Copies that do not contain graphics are posted under the relevant headings. At this moment there is no inscribed or display material regarding Dr. Razmik Panossian's speech. Consequently the introductory remarks of Mr. Attarian are provided below.

Razmik Panossian is the author of the critically acclaimed The Armenians: **From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars** (Columbia University Press and Hurst & Co. 2006). He defended his PhD dissertation on Armenian national identity and nationalism at the London School of Economics (the thesis won the Lord Bryce Prize for Best Dissertation in Comparative and International Politics in the UK. His MA is from York University (Toronto) and his BA from McGill (Montreal). Panossian has published numerous articles on Armenia and the Diaspora and given many lectures and academic conference papers on the subject internationally. He has also participated in the Turkish-Armenian workshops, as well as the Armenia-Diaspora conferences. Currently, he is the Director of Policy, Programmes and Planning at Rights & Democracy in Montreal. He oversees the organisation's international work which focuses on Human Rights and Democratic development.

Panossian's presentation will examine the Armenian experience from a comparative perspective. Similar problems relating to elections and skewed socio-economic development are common in many parts of the world -- from Pakistan to Zimbabwe, from Egypt to Haiti. What makes democratic reform possible? What are some of the key challenges emerging democracies face in consolidating their gains? Every country is unique in its process of democratisation, and there are no models to follow. However, there are "lessons learned" and "best" (and "worst"!) practices from around the world that allow us to identify the obstacles to and enablers of positive change. Such comparative analysis can provide some guidance in new policy directions.

To listen to Razmik Panossian's presentation click here.