

MAXIMIZING DONATIONS TO OUR HOMELAND

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For nearly a month now, Armenian organizations in the diaspora have been urging, encouraging, and pleading for donations from the Armenian public to relieve, even if slightly, the pressures our brothers and sisters are experiencing in our homeland. The result has been less than gratifying: \$142 million from all over the world. Is that the best 8 million Armenians can do when our young men are dying every day to protect our homeland? Below is one patriotic Armenian's suggestion on how to increase our contributions to HAYASTAN and ARTSAKH.--Editor.

Dear Mr. Sinanyan and Representatives of the Armenian Fund,

I'm writing to you with a proposal of a way we can secure consistent and maximum funding to Armenia from the Diasporan communities.

Over the last month many Armenians have been donating online to Himnadram and other funds designated for Armenia. Some have wisely pointed out that if every Armenian donated even a small amount each month, the total of the funds received would significantly assist in Armenia's ability to repair the damage that has been caused during this assault on our nation. Furthermore, the ongoing availability of funds would enable our country to develop and become the thriving nation we all want it to be.

The challenge is that only a minority of the entire pool of Diasporan Armenians are in fact donating, with a small group of Armenians carrying the weight of everyone else. The composition of the funds raised in the last month speak to the truth of this.

A solution to this is the following:

The High Commission of Armenia, in conjunction with the Armenian Fund, can reach out to representatives of all the cities in the Diaspora and start a census of names of every Armenian older than 21 years of age. These names then go on a public database, visible online to all. When someone donates through Himnadram or another fund which will be partnered with the database, it will say how much they donated beside their name. The list will show everyone, and using (for lack of a better word) "public shaming" as a tool, we will motivate all those who chant they love Armenia but don't donate to also participate in the fundraising initiatives. Too many Armenians do not support and hide under the auspices of anonymity. When people know that there is going to be a big **ZERO** beside their name, the embarrassment alone should motivate them to donate. Many will donate more than they otherwise would because they now know people in the community are seeing them. Those who donate through another means can also send receipts so that their donation can be updated too.

Is this something you would like to pursue? If so, please let me know as I would love to assist in any way I can to help with this. I do know getting this set up would take a lot of work, but it is something which we can tremendously benefit from in the long-term.

Thank you and please let me know if you would like to discuss this further.

Vartan Sarkissian

Toronto

Photo republished from a "Eurasia" article.

Comments



Kevork Papazian – 2020-11-02 13:41:46

I have donated to Artsakh fund and intend to donate more this month. I also urged all my friends of an Armenian group as well as my relatives to donate for the war effort. I have 3 first cousins and their families in Yerevan Armenia and needless to say that I helped them too. This Donation Campaign for Armenia and Artsakh should be ongoing either on a monthly or at least on a quarterly basis, each according his or her financial ability. This is our National Duty and is a life or death situation. We must stand by our Homeland in all possible means.



Greg A – 2020-10-31 10:46:24

Yes, the current amount is deplorable. But your "public shaming" strategy???? I'm holding back not to write the descriptive words that comes to my mind now!!!! Is this how one has to prove that they're Armenian? Did you maybe consider that there are other ways people are already contributing? It's because of #\$\$\$\$ like you that I refrained to donate as much as I should!!! People like you make the selfless act of donating impossible, You turn it into a "stick" measuring game!!! Did you maybe also consider that there are people like myself who simply need to be reminded to donate or donate more?? Most of Armenian's in the diaspora come from countries where mis-spending of funds is very common. Did you maybe consider that instead of focusing on shaming Armenians, the effort should be more on representing where the funds are going and how urgent it is? Did you maybe consider that a better strategy is enlist people such as myself to make regular monthly ongoing contributions?? Your public shaming strategy puts you in the same category as the dictators Aiyev and Erdogan. We're saying we're better than "them" but you want to behave like them!! I don't know you personally, but if I have to guess, I'm pretty sure I donated more than you already. Go ahead with your public shaming strategy and look me up under the \$0 list. I hope less people think like you! P.S. I can't also believe that Keghart.org agreed to publish this post in their newsletter.



Lusine Nalbandyan – 2020-10-30 13:52:14

I like the idea of open lists, but I don't like that our enemy sees what we do. If we can do it privately we should do it. I always promote the idea of 365: each Armenian donates a dollar a day. Working adults can donate for themselves and on behalf of their non-working family members, thus Armenia will get 7 or 8 million a day. This will be on top of BIG earmarked donations from groups and individuals.



Armen - 2020-10-29 10:52:03

I think getting the contact info of Armenians and asking them repeatedly "have you done your part?" is a good idea, but listing amounts is wrong because it fringes on privacy and is not fair to people with lesser means. According to the latest Himnadram news conference yesterday, half a million Armenians have donated so far. That is a pathetic number, but means that there is a great potential for email, phone and social media marketing.



Hovanes Boyadjian - 2020-10-29 09:54:18

I agree that the amount gathered is very little for the job. It might be better to put next to the names of those who have not contributed 'still waiting' or 'where are you brother' or 'YOU can make a difference' instead of 0. Also a targeted reminder to those who have not contributed. This is an ongoing battle even during 'peace time' A dollar a day by many will make a huge difference. Hovan



Shushan Vardanyan - 2020-10-29 06:54:00

I have donated 15% of my savings... If only everyone did so, we would save so many lives and our homeland. Plus my immediate family is at the front-line, so I cannot do otherwise. Unfortunately this is a war of \$\$\$ and we have to contribute...



Keghart - 2020-10-29 06:21:30

During WW II a whole column (զորաստի՛ւն) of tanks named after David of Sassoon was donated to Armenia to fight the Nazis. One wonders how much the complex cost. Fast forward. The homeland needs humanitarian aid. Granted. However, Armenia/Artsakh is at war defending itself against all odds for which aircraft, tanks, drones.. you name it... are required. The going rate of a battle tank is around 5-6 million US dollars. Do the math. \$150 million, or thereabouts, could secure a column of 25 tanks, or whatever else our fighting brothers and sisters need to secure the heroic victory. It's something to think about. This uneven war is our second Sardarabad. It will be recorded in the annals of history surpassing many other contemporary regional wars in its intensity and heroism. The homeland is fighting for the existence of our people and the land against four enemies: Turkey, Azerbaijan, Jihadists and remotely Israel which has not ceased to send loads of arms through cargo aircraft.



Tavit - 2020-10-28 14:50:16

Shaming (unfortunately) works. I know that some Jewish congregations do something similar to induce members of the synagogue to donate a reasonable amount which would pay the rabbi's salary and the expenses the synagogue incurs. The rabbi or the people who manage the synagogue publish the name and donation of every member. It's an incentive which seems to work.



Anahit – 2020-10-28 14:49:54

Armenian in fact, not just in name. Armenians who do not help Armenia and Artsakh at our nation's existential moment have no right to call themselves Armenian unless they are living in dire financial conditions. I believe that most Armenians living in Europe and in North America are financially comfortable. It's disgusting to learn that 8 million diaspora Armenians managed to raise a mere \$142. Do they realize, for example, the cost of a single tank? We have lost scores of tanks in one month.



Mihran – 2020-10-28 14:49:08

Deplorable donations. We often mention there are 8 million Armenians in the diaspora. According to published reports, those 8 million donated \$142 million. That's less than \$18 per Armenian. If we deduct the large sums a handful of Armenians donated, our average will dip to \$14? \$12? \$10? This is a shameful state of affairs. It's the cost of a pizza or a couple of hamburgers with french fries.



Harout – 2020-10-28 14:45:53

An Idea for drastic times The idea would seem drastic to some, but desperate times call for desperate measures. I hope the Armenian public responds to this innovative impetus and comes to the aid of Hayastan and Artsakh.