President Der Petrossian Dedicates New Embassy Building

WASHINGTON, DC — "I am now the president of my own country," declared Armenian President Levon Der Petrossian as he dedicated Armenia's new Embassy building on October 25.

In a historic ceremony, celebrated by the Embassy of Armenia and the Armenian Assembly of America — Der Petrossian expressed the Armenian government’s gratitude to noted philanthropist and industrialist Hayk Hovhannisian for his efforts on behalf of the Republic of Armenia and the Embassy of Armenia in Washington, DC.

Armenia’s Ambassador to the United States, Ruben Shugarian, unveiled a plaque signifying the dedication of the building to Hovhannisian’s parents, Stephen and Vosghi Hovhannisian.

As the president, by his own admission, the occasion was pellucid among the Armenian-American guests and friends who traveled from all over the country to see Der Petrossian dedicate the Embassy. Their enthusiasm was reciprocated by the president, who began his remarks by commenting, "I feel like I'm surrounded by citizens of my own country." He thanked Hovhannisian and Armenia’s Embassy staff for their efforts in Armenia since the 1988 earthquake. He also expressed appreciation for the support given to Armenia by the Armenian-American community.

"Ceremonies are important, the territory of Armenia has been expanded by 1,200 square meters," Der Petrossian commented through an interpreter.

In his remarks, Hovhannisian expressed gratitude to the president and Armenia, to his family and guests present. He also thanked the Embassy and Armenia’s people for their support to Armenia. Armenia is the CEO of Hovhannisian, Inc., a real estate investment and development company in New York. He also chairs the Armenian Assembly of America.

The Embassy building was designed by the prominent Washington architect George Oakley Totten and constructed in 1968 as a residence for then-ambassador Gilbert M. Hachikian. It is being renovated by a volunteer committee of Armenian-American volunteers led by Assembly Trustee Vartkesian Balian.

Shugarian acknowledged them by saying, "I want to thank the Steering Committee, led by Assembly Trustee Vartkesian Balian, for their hard work and dedication." He also thanked the Assembly and American-Armenian community for their support to Armenia.

The ceremony concluded with a reception hosted by the Assembly and the Embassy.

On October 25, they are pictured within the embassy building in memory of Hovhannisian’s parents, Stephen and Vosghi Hovhannisian.

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