



Melkonian Alumni & Friends

P. O. Box 1587

Glendale, CA 91209 U.S.A.

Tel. (818) 489-3520

Website: www.melkonianforever.org Email: admin@melkonianforever.org

September 18, 2005

Ms Simone Klinge
Council of Europe
Secretariat of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
Directorate of Co-operation for Local and Regional Democracy
DGI – Legal Affairs
F – 67075 STRASBOURG Cedex

Dear Madame:

We have the honor to confirm that we fully endorse the contents of the letter addressed to you by Pro Edvcatio (Ref.: Dal Koh V. 30.005, 24 VIII 2005) in relation with the protection and development of the Western Armenian Language as minority language in the Diaspora. (Please see copy of Pro Edvcatio letter attached).

We look forward for your taking into consideration our confirmation regarding to the defense of the Western Armenian Language and preservation of its culture, which we strongly believe, that can be achieved with the preservation of Armenian educational institutions such as the only Armenian Boarding Secondary School of Melkonian Institute in Nicosia, Cyprus.

We thank you in advance and appreciate the deliberations of the Council of Europe.

Sincerely yours,

Jirair Magarian – Secretary
Melkonian Alumni and Friends

WAL Defenders (7033 Petit Avenue, Lake Balboa, CA 91406 U.S.A. E-mail: jmagarian@socal.rr.com
Tel: (818) 489 3520 Fax: (818) 782 0254 admin@melkonianforever.org)

Jirair Magarian, MEI Alumnus, Chief Accountant of American Oil Refinery, Lebanon, CEO for IT Communications Network, Lake Balboa, California.

Arto Avedissian, MEI Alumnus, Concerned Armenian, Encino, California.

Julie Magarian Blander, Ph. D., Research Scientist of Immunobiology at Yale University, New haven, CT.
Assistant Professor at Mount Sinai, New York.

Haig Armen, B.F.A. CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) Producer Vancouver B.C. Canada

Tamar Haytayan, Writer Photographer. Vancouver B.C. Canada

Garo Ayaltin, President, Accu Scan Imaging Inc., L.A. USA

Telma Ayaltin, L.A., USA

Nanea Aydinian, Washington, D.C. USA

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Rosie Tokatlian, Vancouver B.C. Canada

Edward Tokatlian, Vancouver, B. C. Canada

Jirair Arslanyan, Vancouver, B.C. Canada

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WAL Defenders (continued from page 1)

Anahid Sarkissian, Beirut, Lebanon

Vatche Semerjian, L.A. CA USA

Armand Ayaltin, DNM, (Doctor of Natural Medicine) and Registrar of the Canadian Herbalists Association of British Columbia, Chairman CAAPA (Canadian Armenian Assn. for the Performing Arts) Western Canada, Senior Professor, Naturopathy Medicine - The New Earth College Canada.

Lorig Ayaltin, L.A. CA USA, Concerned Armenian.

Armen Ayaltin, L.A. CA USA, Concerned Armenian.

Harout D. Mesrobian, M.D., F.A.C.C., Cardiology, MEI Alumnus, Glendale, California.

Garen Avedikian, MEI Alumnus, Concerned Armenian, Los Angeles.

Raffi Zinzalian, La Verne University, CA, USA. MEI Alumnus, Chairman of Melkonian Alumni & Friends.

Zohrab Shamassian, Founding member of Hamazkayin Cultural Assoc. and Melkonian Alumni Assoc. in USA.

Sarkis Shahinian, CFO of Media Imports Inc., MEI Alumnus, Los Angeles.

Krikor Didonian, BS & MS. Office Administrator for Greenpeace San Francisco, USA.

Vahakn Gharibian, MEI Alumnus, Computer Science & Technology, Los Angeles.

Garbis Armen, Concerned Armenian.

Sirarpi Arslanyan, Vancouver, B.C. Canada

Natalie Gomez, Architect, Woodbury University, Burbank, California. Armenian.

Haroutyoun Sarkissian, Beirut, Lebanon

Maggie Schmidt, MA, California State University of Northridge, Arts & Graphics, Concerned Armenian.

Bedros Jingoian, MEI Alumnus, Los Angeles, U.S.A. A Cypriot by origin.

Dikran Ghorghorian, MS Engineering, Armenian Polytechnic Institute. Director of Engineering Magna Inter'l.

Nurel Beylerian, PhD., P.Eng. President Bomar Marketing, Inc. Williamsville, NY.

Anoush Ekmekjian, Dental Technician Vancouver, B.C. Canada

Lily Ekmekjian, Business Admin. Vancouver, B.C. Canada

Susan Ekmekjian, Fashion Designer, Amsterdam, NL.

Zara Mekrtichian, DMD, Homs Syria

Talar Kazanjian, Political Scientist, Damascus Syria.

Talar Istanbulian, Political Scientist, Ottawa, Canada

Shant Kazanjian, Computer Science, L.A. USA.

Anto Gregorian, Graphic Designer San Francisco, USA

Krikor Jaghdjian, Trustee Board Chairman of the Armenian Cultural Assn. of B.C. Vancouver.

Kohar H. Pakoyan, PHR, HR Generalist Virginia, USA

Nairy F. Pakoyan (Bozadjian), Concerned Armenian, Virginia USA.

Armen Kurkjian, St. Sahag-St. Mesrob Saturday School Teacher / Armenian History, Toronto

Past Chairman, Holy Trinity Armenian Church Parish Council, Toronto

Past Chairman, Holy Cross Armenian Church Parish Council, Toronto

Founder of Holy Cross Armenian Day School, Toronto

Past Chairman, Holy Cross Armenian Day School, Board of Trustees, Toronto

Chairman, Armenian World Alliance (present)

Attachment: Copy of the Pro Edvcatio's Letter

cc: Pro Edvcatio HQ.

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UK**

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26th September 2005

Ms Simone Klinge
Secretariat of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
Directorate of Co-operation for Local and Regional Democracy
COUNCIL OF EUROPE
DG1 Legal Affairs
F – 67075 **STRASBOURG**
Cedex

Dear Madame,

**Re: European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.(C.E., ETS – N°148)
Protection of the Western Armenian language**

We the under named would like to bring to your attention the following and ask for your help in connection with the above Charter for the protection of the Western Armenian Language.

We are sure you are aware that Western Armenian is different to the Eastern Armenian, sometimes known as Russian Armenian. Western Armenian was the language of the Armenians living in Cilicia and western Turkey, but as you no doubt know, those Armenians in these parts who were not massacred, were forcibly thrown out of their homeland. They settled in countries which would accept them and give refuge to them. Thus many settled in the member countries of the present European Union.

The contribution made by the Western Armenian to Armenian literature is far greater and more important than it may be apparent. The Armenian monastery on the island of St. Lazarre in Venice, for example, has published a tremendous number of Armenian books in Western Armenian of great literary value, for years.

However, It is extremely difficult, as we are sure you appreciate, to keep such languages alive in countries where their users are only a tiny minority of the population. The successful preservation of these languages can only be achieved with special help, such as the Council of Europe is proposing and for which we are grateful, and special institutions which act like rudders to give a sense of direction for the drifting ships of the languages of small communities.

The Melkonian Educational Institute in Cyprus has been one of the very few such special institutions and probably **the** most important of these “rudders” since the mid 1920’s. It has produced graduates with probably better knowledge of Western Armenian than any other organisation, as well as given a very high standard of general education for thousands of Armenians.

The **A**rmenian **G**eneral **B**enevolent **U**nion which was entrusted with the management of Melkonian by the Trustees of the will, has now decided to close it and sell off the assets.

The Will of Melkonian brothers, a copy of which I have seen, does **NOT** give the Melkonian and its assets to any body but is only a Trust to be used for the purpose it was intended. Thus, we believe AGBU does not have the right to sell it off; it is not theirs to do so. AGBU have claimed that they do have such right, in accordance with a "later" will. Despite many requests by many organisations, this alleged second will has not surfaced to the best of our knowledge.

Consequently, we need help to ensure that this irresponsible act of closing Melkonian does not take place and for this we need all the help we can get.

The Council of Europe and its Charter for Regional or Minority Languages could give us the help to achieve this aim of preserving the Melkonian Educational Institute, which is established in a EU country and its aims certainly coincide with the aims of your Charter.

We would therefore ask you to use your office and influence with the Government of Cyprus or any other entity, to help achieve the reversal of AGBU's wrong decision of doing away with the Melkonian.

Yours faithfully and hopefully,

Tatto Couligian
Melkonian Graduate
Civil Engineer (Retired)
Chairman Cheshire
Armenian Church and Community Manchester
UK

A. Nahabedian MD, BS, MS
Orthopaedic Surgeon
Crewe
Chehsire CW1 4RN
UK

Harout Manougian
Western Armenian Language Tutor
Western Armenian Saturday School TA
Cofounder, the Armenian Students' Association
The University of Waterloo
Waterloo/Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Also, my family members:
Sam and Sevan Manougian
Toronto ARS Day School
Parents and Community Members
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Arpi Ajamian
Vice Principal
Toronto ARS Day School
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

Vahan Ajamian
Member of Regional Executive, ARF
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Raffi Titizian
in jail since 1984 as an Armenian
political prisoner
Montreal Quebec
Canada