

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A battle lost | 1

A war won | 2

“By the Lord’s Providence Armenians have always remained standing.”

Dear friends of Christians for Armenia

A battle lost

44 days: this is how long the brutal war — carefully prepared, rehearsed and launched by Azerbaijan against the historic Armenian territory of Artsakh — lasted (I refer you to my previous newsletter for the historical background of the conflict).

Azerbaijan was heavily supported by Turkish officers, who conducted most of the military operations. Azerbaijanis were equipped with hundreds of sophisticated and lethal drones operated by remote control. They were supplied by Turkey and Israel, two major commercial and military partners of Azerbaijan (along with other Western countries). These kamikaze drones dropping cluster-munitions on both military and civil targets rapidly established the military superiority of Azerbaijan. Peaceful residents of towns and villages were rapidly forced to flee from their homeland. The use of white phosphor bombs is also currently being documented by international medical experts visiting hospitals in Erevan: severely wounded soldiers display deep burns which continue to destroy their flesh weeks after they were injured.

Despite Azerbaijan’s initial denials, its army was also reinforced by about 3000 Jihadist mercenaries conveyed to the front by Turkey and sent as cannon fodder on the front line with near indifference from the rest of the world. They were promised a monthly wage of nearly \$2000 and \$100 extra for each beheaded Armenian soldier.

Armenia, a tiny country whose total budget of the nation hardly equals the military budget of Azerbaijan (which in turn lives largely by its rich oil and gas revenue), fought an unequal battle against its two neighbors and their Jihadist mercenaries. Gradually losing ground, weapons and troops, Armenia and the small republic of Artsakh had no choice but to accept on November 9 the terms of a cease-fire brokered between the parties by Russia: returning to Azerbaijan all seven buffer districts around Artsakh, and losing about a third of the territory of Artsakh itself, including the emblematic city of Shushi, whose cathedral was bombed while children and women were seeking shelter in the basement. About 2000 Russian soldiers will serve as peacekeepers, implementing for five renewable years the cease fire and allowing Armenian refugees to return to their houses and towns in what still remains of Artsakh. Other refugees have lost their homes and pos-





sessions, many burning them down just before they were forced to leave everything behind. According to official statements, military losses amount to about 2700/2800 soldiers on each side, not counting some 500 mercenaries nor civilian victims on both sides. Meanwhile, a few days ago Erdogan and Alyev celebrated in Baku their joint “heroic” victory during a pompous military parade destined to galvanize their common nationalism.

A lot more could and should be said about the current social and moral distress prevailing in Armenia after these crushing events. In the midst of an uncontrolled Covid pandemic, political turmoil is raging in the streets of Erevan. Crowds are demonstrating to demand the resignation of those deemed responsible for the military defeat and for signing a cease fire considered to be a national treason. There are still many unidentified bodies. Shocking video material displaying the ghastly desecration of beheaded bodies of Armenian soldiers or tortured ones before they were executed, adds to the general humiliation and anger. Families are anxiously waiting to hear whether they will be able to give a decent funeral to their husbands, brothers, fathers, children, or fiancés. Thousands of refugees, devoid of everything, have found a shelter at fellow Armenians’ homes. Remarkably enough, there are nowhere refugee camps to be seen. Does Armenia still have a future in those distressing conditions?

A war won

Christmas means the beginning of Christ’s victory over Satan and the forces of evil. But let us not forget that Christmas was immediately followed by the massacre of innocent children in Bethlehem and entire region by Herod “the Great,” an evil king opposed to all godliness, and in particular to God’s unique Messiah (Matt. 2:16-18). The message that Christians for Armenia needs to proclaim over and over again to Armenians as a nation that historically and culturally considers itself Christian, is the Good News of Christ’s final and total victory. Despite the numerous trials they have endured during their several thousand-year-old history, by the Lord’s Providence Armenians have always remained standing and will continue doing so. But they desperately need to hear the unadulterated Gospel.

Will you help us increase our range of broadcasts on the network of Radio Hay, which still broadcasts over Artsakh and can be heard by locals? **We currently need an extra US \$6000 per year to put on the air three times a week a new range of short podcasts that are ready to be translated and recorded.**

May our Lord bless you during this season of Advent and celebration of our Savior’s birth.

Rev Eric Kayayan

Four graduates of Endanik Christian Center - our partners in Armenia - died in combat, while 11 are still reported missing



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