

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 23, 2002

CONTACT: Angel Venable
E-mail: avenable@aaainc.org

**ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVE TOURS NEW INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CENTER
IN YEREVAN**

WASHINGTON, DC - Armenian Assembly Country Director for Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, Arpi Vartanian, toured the site for a new international laboratory in Yerevan this month, soon to provide scientific tools such as high-powered X-rays available to scientists worldwide.

When completed, the Center for the Advancement of Natural Discoveries using Light Emission (CANDLE), will allow scientists to conduct research in fields such as biotechnology, environment, and earth sciences as well as many others in Armenia. Assembly Associate Trustee, Jirair Hovnanian, who is the program's President, together with his team of scientists and engineers have worked diligently this past year with the U.S. and Armenian governments in making the case for the project and in establishing a site in Armenia. The new Center will help position the country as one of a select number of international scientific centers in the world.

"We will continue to cooperate with the Armenian Government to insure that CANDLE becomes one of the most successful ventures for Armenia - it will be a source of long-term benefits," Hovnanian said. "The influx of visiting scientists and their families is just one aspect of how CANDLE will benefit Armenia's economy. During the construction of the facility over a five year period, there will be a need for skilled tradesmen such as masons, carpenters, electricians and plumbers."

"We thank the Armenian Government for providing a suitable site for CANDLE in Yerevan," he added.

CANDLE Technical Director Vasili Tsakanov noted the historic initiative observing that "this strategic project is critical to the development of our country...I believe the scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs in Armenia and worldwide would be proud to participate in the success of this project."

"CANDLE is an unique opportunity for the future of Armenia. The simple fact that it will create a world class, international center in Armenia will positively impact Armenia in so many areas," Vartanian said. "Companies active in research and development will be encouraged to establish facilities and offices here to facilitate their research. As a result, Armenian scientists will be able to utilize their skills and knowledge in Armenia. These new centers will employ workers, thus contributing to the economy of Armenia."

Director of the project, Emeritus Professor Alexander Abashian of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University notes, "The project is one which meets the highest standards of excellence, scientific merit and economic benefit."

Abashian also cited an August report compiled by a high level panel of experts convened by the U.S. State Department, with assistance from the U.S. National Science Foundation, to review the CANDLE Design Report. In it, the experts discussed the scientific and technical

as well as the economic impact and revenue potential for Armenia. The report also stated that "given the advanced state of technology relevant to these projects and the expertise and experience of labs around the world, there is a high level of confidence that CANDLE will be a technical success." The report added that CANDLE "is a world-class facility capable of enabling frontier work across the full range of physical, life and engineering sciences. Being among a few of the most modern synchrotron facilities, its users will be able to compete at the frontier."

The project requires an estimated \$48 million in capital costs for construction of the facility and will take approximately five years to complete. The annual operating expenses will be paid by those who utilize the facility. Hovnanian has submitted an official request to the European Union to invest \$4 million a year in the project for a five-year period after completion of CANDLE. He has also requested funding from members of the international scientific community to support this effort.

The Assembly continues to support Hovnanian's efforts in advocating for a U.S. investment in the Center's capital costs.

<p>The Armenian Assembly of America is the largest Washington-based nationwide organization promoting public understanding and awareness of Armenian issues. It is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization.</p>
--

Editor's Note: An excerpt from the Executive Summary from the high level panel of experts convened by the U.S. State Department with assistance from the U.S. National Foundation to review the CANDLE Design Report is included.

"THE SCIENTIFIC CASE

The Panel believes that the scientific case for a machine meeting CANDLE specifications is very robust...The facility described in the proposal is a world class facility capable of enabling frontier work across the full range of physical, life and engineering sciences...its users will be able to compete at the frontier. The potential for enhancing scientific and technical education is great as many of the users will be faculty and their graduate students at Armenian universities...In light of this potential for putting Armenian and regional scientists and their students at the frontiers across broad areas of science and technology, the facility is an excellent investment from a scientific/technical point of view.

TECHNICAL DESIGN

There is no doubt that a scientific instrument of this description can be built. The panel is deeply impressed with the technical quality of the proposed accelerator systems, the efficiency with which the proposal was produced, and the positive attitude and commitment of the proposers.

ECONOMIC IMPACT and REVENUE POTENTIAL

The panel identified seven positive impacts: direct creation of jobs, potential demonstration of political stability for prospective investors, workforce enhancement, attraction of new high quality industry, multiplier on annual budget coming from outside the country by up to three times (World Bank estimate); usage of currently under-subscribed electrical generating capacity...Thus...a positive impact of about 20M\$ per annum to the Armenian economy might be anticipated at this stage of Armenia's recovery."



CAPTION: Technical Director Vasili Tsakanov (second from right) describes CANDLE and its potential uses and applications to Armenian Assembly Country Director for Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh Arpi Vartanian. CANDLE Deputy Director - Machine Physics Yuri Martirossyan (far left) and Deputy Director - Engineering & Fabrication Vardan Avagyan (second from left) look on.



CAPTION: From left: Armenian Assembly Country Director for Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh Arpi Vartanian, CANDLE Deputy Director - Engineering & Fabrication Vardan Avagyan, Technical Director Vasili Tsakanov and Deputy Director - Machine Physics Yuri Martirossyan discuss Armenia's CANDLE project.