



THE DELEGATION NEWS

WINTER 2017

THE DELEGATION FOR FRIENDSHIP AMONG WOMEN

www.friendshipamongwomen.org

members password: women67

MISSION STATEMENT

"The Delegation for Friendship Among Women is a non-political organization that nurtures friendship between women from the U.S. and other countries and seeks nuanced understanding of women's work and lives throughout the world.

The Delegation accomplishes its mission primarily by self-funded study trips to countries where formal relations with the U.S. are often in transition. Delegates meet with a variety of notable women with whom we exchange ideas and solutions, as well as links to relevant resources. Upon returning to the United States, Delegation members continue the purposeful dialogue with the women abroad and share knowledge and insights with other U.S. citizens through speeches and articles."

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

New Year's greetings Delegates,

I am wishing you all health and happiness in 2018. The Delegation for Friendship has been in a flurry of activity as we start 2018. We have been finalizing our agenda for our board retreat, finishing plans for our 50th anniversary celebration, selecting our tour company and outlining details regarding our next Delegation trip.

Our board retreat will be held Friday, February 9, 2018, in Rio Verde, Arizona, from 9 am to 4 pm at the home of delegate Jan Gruel. I thank both Jan and her husband George for graciously offering their home as a location for us to gather for our official annual business meeting. George also deserves accolades for compiling and formatting Mary Pomeroy's biography which also includes the history of the Delegation founded fifty years ago. The book has now been published.

Our 50th anniversary celebratory dinner will be held Saturday evening, February 10th, 2018, from 6:30 PM to 10:00 PM at The Desert Mountain Golf Club, 10333 Rockaway Hills Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85262. Mary Pomeroy is being honored as one of our founding Delegates and one who has devoted the last 50 years as a continuing board participant with her experience and sage advice. For decades, she was the trip planner, usually flying to the destination ahead of time at her own expense to set up contacts, meetings and accommodations for the Delegation. She has also accumulated a library of organized material for each journey and the women leaders and groups worldwide with whom the Delegation has met for half a century.

I personally am looking forward to reconnecting with other Delegates from around the country who I may not have seen since traveling with them on my first Delegation trip to Cuba in 2002. I am equally excited about seeing those with whom I journeyed on subsequent Delegation trips. I am also very pleased with the opportunity to meet several Delegates for the first time. It will be a wonderful opportunity for newer members to meet other Delegates, especially since we are from so many different areas across the country.

The last piece of exciting news is our next upcoming Delegation journey which will be to **both** Georgia and Armenia from October 15th to October 29th, 2018. Please see the latest details, including general itinerary and costs in this newsletter.

Don't forget to check out our Facebook page, "The Delegation for Friendship Among Women", and as a Delegate, join the group if you haven't already. Thanks to Delegate Caroline Olstad for designing our Facebook page. Board member Patti Kenyon continues to update our website adding information frequently so check that out too:

www.friendshipamongwomen.org , member password is: women67

Looking forward to chatting with those attending the 50th anniversary dinner and traveling to Georgia and Armenia in October for what should be a very memorable trip. Keep us updated with any news for future newsletters.

Appreciatively,
Dr. Cathi Smith, President
The Delegation for Friendship Among Women
Dr.CathleenSmith@gmail.com

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The Delegation very happily welcomes its new members. These women continue to add depth and experience to the organization.

VIOLET MITCHELL-ENOS, Scottsdale, Arizona: Since 2001, Violet has worked for the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC), most recently as the Director of Health and Human Services. Violet has worked for a number of Indian tribes and Indian organizations in Arizona throughout her professional career, including serving as Community Manager of her own tribe. Her primary focus has been on child abuse prevention/intervention, women's and family issues, substance abuse prevention/intervention, conflict resolution, and economic development. Violet has degrees in Social Work and has studied Law. She is widely recognized as a deeply devoted advocate for American Indian communities and intergovernmental policy issues.

KATE HELMS TILLERY, Phoenix, Arizona: Kate has been a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Science at Arizona State University (ASU), Tempe, Arizona since 2015, joining the department immediately after completing her Ph.D. in Speech and Hearing at ASU. She has worked as the Speech and Language Pathologist for a number of organizations, including the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona, since 1998. Kate has worked for the past two summers as a faculty mentor for the Hearing for Humanity Study Abroad Program in Malawi and has traveled broadly throughout her career. She speaks French and American Sign Language, and she is an avid hiker, cyclist and swimmer.

GAIL W. COSTELLO, Scottsdale, Arizona and Corona Del Mar, California: Gail has lived a full professional life as an Art Therapist, Graduate School Teacher, Licensed Clinical Professional and has most recently launched a successful tree nursery on her family farm. The 80,000 trees are raised to replace those killed by disease in hard-hit communities. Gail is now a successful artist and an accomplished competitive horseback rider, both in the English and Western style. She has won many awards, including ranking in the top 15 in the world in the Amateur 15,000 Cutting Championship. Gail will be traveling to Argentina in February 2018, to play polo and learn the language.

JULIE PANTISKAS, Pasadena, California: Julie is a successful entrepreneurial professional with over 25 years' experience managing business operations and marketing in various industries. In 2017, she joined Salt Creek Capital as an Executive Partner. Prior to joining Salt Creek Capital, Julie was Executive Vice President at Summit Funding, Inc. She has held leadership roles at the Walt Disney Company, Belkin International, Oberthur Technology and Deloitte Consulting. Earlier in her career, Julie was President of her 3rd generation family business, the Nut Tree Restaurant in Northern California. Julie earned a B.S. in Agricultural and Managerial Economics from the University of California at Davis. She serves on the board of American Bone Health and previously Pasadena Angels' board.

SHARON NALBONE RICHARDSON, Malvern, Pennsylvania: Sharon has been a traveler ever since she was selected to be her high school's first foreign exchange student and was sent to the Philippines. She has traveled throughout the US and to all the continents, except Antarctica. Sharon has earned two Master's degrees (one in England and 6 graduate credits in

Israel), a JD, and a PhD in Educational Administration. She is especially proud of her work initiating a Cultural Exchange program in one of her school districts which became the first in their county to add Mandarin as a foreign language. This enabled students the life-changing opportunity to visit a high school in Harbin, China. Sharon feels very strongly that knowledge and friendship are guiding principles for working toward worldwide peace and stability.

PROFILES

This section is an attempt to help all of us to get to know each other a bit better. In each issue of the Newsletter, I hope to include a profile of a Member of the Delegation and a past or present Board Member.



Kim Harms, Minnesota, Board Member

Kim is a Dentist, public health advocate, consumer advisor, and speaker interested in mentoring women. She works with Books for Africa via her non-profit organization, The Eric Harms Memorial Library Foundation, to send educational materials for all levels of schooling in both rural and urban settings in Rwanda. Kim works with the dental school in Rwanda to develop patient education and disease prevention initiatives. She has received many awards, including Mshale Newspaper's African Award and First Friend of the University of Rwanda.

Brenda has had a fast-paced seventeen-year career in the international sector of the packaged consumer products industry. Her primary focus was in developing markets in the Latin American Region where she traveled extensively, leveraging her proficiency in Spanish and Portuguese. For seven years she has served on the Board of Directors of the Redding Area #39's Chapter of the National Charity League Inc., a mother-daughter charitable organization that promotes leadership, culture, and community outreach. Brenda is a lover of nature and is passionate about the need to educate the public on the preservation of our natural environment and the wildlife therein.



Brenda Dominici Johnson, Connecticut

RETREAT AND 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

As you all know by now, the **50th Anniversary Celebration will be held on Saturday evening, February 10, 2018**, following the Delegation's Annual Board Retreat. All Delegation Members are invited and each member may bring one guest. The Celebration will be held at The Desert Mountain Golf Club in the Sonoran desert of North Scottsdale, Arizona. The Apache Clubhouse, a beautiful room with a private outside patio with a fireplace, has been reserved for the event.

The Delegation members who have put this celebration together are Jill Christiansen, Carolyn Moats, and Diane Dunning. You will find below the list of nearby hotels and optional recreational activities that Carolyn has compiled. Jill is working on the menu and other details of the dinner. The cost per person for the evening will be \$100.00.

HOTEL SUGGESTIONS FOR DELEGATION WEEKEND:

- **The Boulders**- a Hilton Hotel, approximately \$460/night
www.theboulders.com/; 480-488-9009
- **The Marriot Desert Ridge**, approximately \$340 a night
www.marriott.com/hotels/.../phxdr-jw-marriott-phoenix-desert-ridge-resort-and-spa
480-293-5000
- **Spring Hill Suites**, approximately \$238 a night
www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/phxsh-springhill-suites-scottsdale-north/; 480-922-8700
- **Carefree Conference Center**, approximately \$149 a night through trip advisor link
www.carefree-resort.com/en-us/https://www.tripadvisor.com › ... › Central Arizona › Carefree › Carefree Hotels; 480-485-3840

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS FOR DELEGATION WEEKEND:

Hiking

Sunday morning meet at Granite Mountain at 8 am to hike with Carolyn Moats. Let her know if you will be joining her at carolyn.moats@gmail.com. This is a beautiful gentle sloping hike of 5-6 miles. There are no restrooms at the trailhead.

Address: 31402 N 136th St, Scottsdale, AZ 85262

McDowell Sonoran Preserve Granite Mountain Trailhead

<http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/preserve>

For information about other trails to hike and possibly hike at other times, email Roberta Williams at robertawllms17@gmail.com.

Visit Taliesin West

We are hoping there is enough interest for a group tour on Friday night, February 9, 2018, at 6:30pm for the **Night Lights Tour**.

The romance of Taliesin West comes to life during this special evening tour, an excellent date night activity. Taliesin West's fire-breathing dragon makes a guest appearance while Wright's desert masterpiece glows warmly like a jewel under Arizona's starry skies. This tour is not intended for children under the age of 13. Reservations are required. Email Carolyn.moats@gmail.com for reservations.

Taliesin West is a National Historic Landmark nestled in the desert foothills of the McDowell Mountains in Scottsdale, AZ. It is also the home of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation and the School of Architecture at Taliesin.

Wright's beloved winter home and the bustling headquarters of the Taliesin Fellowship, was established in 1937 and diligently handcrafted over many years into a world unto itself. Deeply connected to the desert from which it was forged, Taliesin West possesses an almost prehistoric grandeur. It was built and maintained almost entirely by Wright and his apprentices, making it among the most personal of the architect's creations.

Museums

- THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MUSEUM: <https://mim.org/>
The Musical Instrument Museum is located in Phoenix, Arizona. Opened in April 2010, it is the largest museum of its type in the world.
Address: 4725 E Mayo Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85050
Phone: [480-478-6000](tel:480-478-6000)
Email Linda Hoeschler who has volunteered her husband to guide a group at lhoeschler@gmail.com
- THE HEARD MUSEUM: heard.org/
The Heard Museum is a private, not-for-profit museum located in Phoenix, Arizona. The museum is dedicated to the preservation and advancement of American Indian art.
Address: 2301 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004
Phone: [602-252-8840](tel:602-252-8840)
Email Diane Dunning who has volunteered to take a group at dianedunning@gmail.com

Botanical Garden

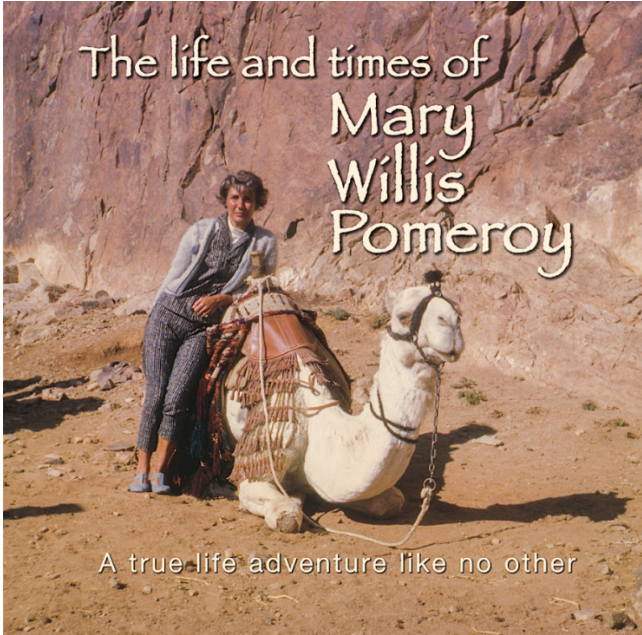
- DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN, contact@dbg.org
Address: 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix, AZ 85008
Phone: [480-941-1225](tel:480-941-1225)
Open Daily 8 A.M. - 8 P.M.
Contact Holly Jobe who has offered to escort a group at holly.jobe@gmail.com

Golf

Our resident golf expert is Jill Christiansen who can give you guidance and possibly match you with other interested parties. You can reach Jill at jpchrist@msn.com

The 50th Anniversary Celebration dinner will also serve as the venue to honor one of the Founding-Members of The Delegation for Friendship Among Women, **Mary Pomeroy**. Mary's

book, *The Life and Times of Mary Willis Pomeroy: A True Life Adventure Like No Other*, will be coming out soon. Mary’s life story is exceedingly rich and is intimately wrapped up with the Delegation and its beginnings and history.



Georgia & Armenia with The Delegation for Friendship Among Women

**Tbilisi • Vardzia • Signagi • Yerevan
Travel Dates: October 15-29, 2018**



Brief Description

This in-depth Delegation trip presents a slice of life in the Republic of Georgia and its neighbor, Armenia, which share stunning mountain backdrops, powerful stone architecture, and a strong code of hospitality. Contemporary life here is layered with centuries of epic struggles,

unwavering persistence, unwritten rules of friendliness and hierarchy, and incredible accomplishments.

Go beyond the outward manifestations of culture and commerce, and discover the history and living traditions of these ancient peoples through interaction with the women – entrepreneurs, civil society leaders, health practitioners, artists, chefs, youth, and politicians.

In Georgia, we will meet prominent women, and participate in a roundtable discussion with members of the business associa, and an innovative natural winery.

In Armenia, we'll meet with female politicians, the organizers of a charitable fund for the disadvantaged, and an Armenian woman who cooks a wonderful meal for us in her 170-year-old home, using her grandmother's recipes.

Add awe-inspiring UNESCO sites, a town dug out of living rock, the flourishing urban life of the capital cities, Tbilisi and Yerevan, the beauty and tranquility of a countryside entwined with grapevines, all set to a soundtrack of ancient spine-tingling polyphonic songs of love, longing and loyalty.

DRAFT Daily Itinerary

- Day 1, Mon, Oct 15 Arrive Tbilisi, Georgia
- Day 2, Tue, Oct 16 Tbilisi
- Day 3, Wed, Oct 17 Tbilisi
- Day 4, Thu, Oct 18 Tbilisi
- Day 5, Fri, Oct 19 Tbilisi • Kazbegi via Mtshketa
- Day 6, Sat, Oct 20 Kazbegi
- Day 7, Sun, Oct 21 Kazbegi • Tbilisi via Gori, Uplistsikhe
- Day 8, Mon, Oct 22 Tbilisi • Signagi
- Day 9, Tue, Oct 23 Signagi • Tbilisi
- Day 10, Wed, Oct 24 Tbilisi • Yerevan, Armenia via Lake Sevan Yerevan
- Day 11, Thu, Oct 25 Yerevan
- Day 12, Fri, Oct 26 Yerevan
- Day 13, Sat, Oct 27 Yerevan • Echmiadzin & Zvartnots
- Day 14, Sun, Oct 28 Yerevan • Ashtarak day trip
- Day 15, Mon, Oct 29 Depart Yerevan

Cost: \$4500 double occupancy, excluding roundtrip flight from the U.S.

Trip arrangements will be managed by MIR Corporation with the assistance of an in-country provider in each country. MIR Corp www.mircorp.com/ has over 30 years of experience in providing travel in Russia and former Soviet states and boasts many industry awards. They can help individual delegates with travel from the U.S. through their airline partnerships flying into Tbilisi and out of Yerevan. Contact Anne Thorsteinson annet@mircorp.com ; toll free direct number: 855-691-7903.

Visas are not required for U.S. and EU passport holders to either Georgia or Armenia. Other nationalities may require visas, please inquire.

REGISTRATION FORM

Georgia & Armenia with The Delegation for Friendship Among Women

DEADLINE for submission May 1, 2018 • \$500 Deposit Required

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone (home): _____ **Mobile:** _____

Age Range (circle one): 20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60-70 70-80

This is my first Delegation trip: Yes or No

Preferred Roommate: _____

(If this is your first Delegation trip and you do not have a preference, you will be matched with an experienced delegate in your age range)

Hotels in Tblisi and Yeravan will be at the Mariotts

Please note, you will be asked to:

- participate in two pre-trip telephone conference calls prior to departure;
- provide a brief one paragraph biographical/professional summary for the trip brochure;
- prepare for the trip and meetings through readings, websites, videos; and
- correspond with a possible “counterpart” prior to departure.

Trip-related materials will be provided on the Georgia/Armenia Resources page of the Delegation website www.friendshipamongwomen.org/. A Facebook page will be created for trip participants for questions, details and additional resources. Members are encouraged to add to the resources.

Questions: Holly Jobe holly.job@gmail.com 215-479-7823

Diane Dunning dianedunning@gmail.com (267) 474-0010

PLEASE SEND REGISTRATION FORM AND DEPOSIT CHECK TO:

Jill Christiansen, Treasurer

540 South Park Rd

Lagrange, IL 60525

PAYMENT DETAILS AND DEADLINES

Delegation Two-week trip to Armenia & Georgia

Travel Dates: OCTOBER 15 – 29, 2018

Please note: The number of participants is limited to 16 people.

- Participation will be determined on a first-come first-served basis, and places will be held according to the date we receive your Registration Form.
- Delegates whose registration is received after the trip is full will be placed on a waiting list and informed should a place become available.

Total cost of trip, includes in-country travel, lodging & most meals; entrance fees, tips, gratuities, honoraria, Embassy reception, closing dinner and Mary Pomeroy Award
\$4500.00

DEADLINES

MAY 1, 2018. Deposit due with Registration Form	\$ 500.00
AUGUST 1, 2018. Balance of Trip Cost due	\$4000.00

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- **Refunds and Cancellations**
Before MAY 15, 2018. \$250 of the deposit is refundable, after which date the deposit is forfeited and non-refundable.
 - **Before AUGUST 15, 2018.** Full Trip Cost Balance amount is refundable, after which date the payment is forfeited and non-refundable. As of August first, a delegate is considered a trip participant; plans and commitments are made accordingly.
 - **After AUGUST 15, 2018.** Should a Delegate need to cancel, the Delegation will attempt to find a replacement. If a replacement is found, it is up to the two individual Delegates involved to make financial arrangements for reimbursement.

PLEASE SEND REGISTRATION FORM AND DEPOSIT CHECK TO:

Jill Christiansen, Treasurer
540 South Park Rd
Lagrange, IL 60525

GEORGIA



BACKGROUND (from the CIA World Factbook)

The region of present day Georgia contained the ancient kingdoms of Colchis and Kartli-Iberia. The area came under Roman influence in the first centuries A.D., and Christianity became the state religion in the 330s. Domination by Persians, Arabs, and Turks was followed by a Georgian golden age (11th-13th centuries) that was cut short by the Mongol invasion of 1236. Subsequently, the Ottoman and Persian empires competed for influence in the region. Georgia was absorbed into the Russian Empire in the 19th century. Independent for three years (1918-1921) following the Russian revolution, it was forcibly incorporated into the USSR in 1921 and regained its independence when the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991.

Mounting public discontent over rampant corruption and ineffective government services, followed by an attempt by the incumbent Georgian Government to manipulate parliamentary elections in November 2003, touched off widespread protests that led to the resignation of Eduard SHEVARDNADZE, president since 1995. In the aftermath of that popular movement, which became known as the "Rose Revolution," new elections in early 2004 swept Mikheil SAAKASHVILI into power along with his United National Movement (UNM) party.

Progress on market reforms and democratization has been made in the years since independence, but this progress has been complicated by Russian assistance and support to the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Periodic flare-ups in tension and violence culminated in a five-day conflict in August 2008 between Russia and Georgia, including the invasion of large portions of undisputed Georgian territory. Russian troops pledged to pull back from most occupied Georgian territory, but in late August 2008 Russia unilaterally recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and Russian military forces remain in those regions.

Billionaire philanthropist Bidzina IVANISHVILI's unexpected entry into politics in October 2011 brought the divided opposition together under his Georgian Dream coalition, which won a

majority of seats in the October 2012 parliamentary elections and removed UNM from power. Conceding defeat, SAAKASHVILI named IVANISHVILI as prime minister and allowed Georgian Dream to create a new government. Georgian Dream's Giorgi MARGVELASHVILI was inaugurated as president on 17 November 2013, ending a tense year of power-sharing between SAAKASHVILI and IVANISHVILI. IVANISHVILI voluntarily resigned from office after the presidential succession, and Georgia's legislature on 20 November 2013 confirmed Irakli GARIBASHVILI as his replacement. GARIBASHVILI was replaced by Giorgi KVIRIKASHVILI in December 2015. KVIRIKASHVILI remained Prime Minister following Georgian Dream's success in the October 2016 parliamentary elections, where the party won a constitutional majority.

These changes in leadership represent unique examples of a former Soviet state that emerged to conduct democratic and peaceful government transitions of power. Popular and government support for integration with the West is high in Georgia. Joining the EU and NATO are among the country's top foreign policy goals.

COUNTRY FACTS (from the CIA World Factbook)

Border Countries (4): Armenia 219 km, Azerbaijan 428 km, Russia 894 km, Turkey 273 km

Climate: Warm and pleasant; Mediterranean-like on Black Sea coast

Terrain: Largely mountainous with Great Caucasus Mountains in the north and Lesser Caucasus Mountains in the south. Lowest point: Black Sea 0 m. Highest point: Mt'a Shkhara 5,193 m

Natural resources: Timber, hydropower, manganese deposits, iron ore, copper, minor coal and oil deposits; coastal climate and soils allow for important tea and citrus growth

Land use: 35.5% agricultural land; 5.8% arable land (1.8% permanent crops; 27.9% permanent pasture); 39.4% forest; 25.1% other (2011 est.)

Population - distribution: Settlement coincides closely to the central valley, with emphasis on the capital city of Tbilisi in the east; smaller urban agglomerations dot the Black Sea coast, with Bat'umi being the largest

Natural hazards: Earthquakes

Environment - current issues: Air pollution, particularly in Rust'avi; heavy pollution of Mtkvari River and the Black Sea; inadequate supplies of potable water; soil pollution from toxic chemicals

Environment - international agreements: Party to: Air Pollution, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands

Geography - note: Strategically located east of the Black Sea; Georgia controls much of the Caucasus Mountains and the routes through them; Krubera Cave in the western part of the country is the deepest-known cave in the world; at -2,197 m it is the only known cave on earth deeper than 2,000 m



Tbilisi, Georgia
ARMENIA



BACKGROUND (from the CIA World Factbook)

Armenia prides itself on being the first nation to formally adopt Christianity (early 4th century). Despite periods of autonomy, over the centuries Armenia came under the sway of various empires including the Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Persian, and Ottoman. During World War I in the western portion of Armenia, the Ottoman Empire instituted a policy of forced resettlement coupled with other harsh practices that resulted in at least 1 million Armenian deaths. The eastern area of Armenia was ceded by the Ottomans to Russia in 1828; this portion declared its independence in 1918, but was conquered by the Soviet Red Army in 1920.

Armenian leaders remain preoccupied by the long conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, a primarily Armenian-populated region, assigned to Soviet Azerbaijan in the 1920s by Moscow. Armenia and Azerbaijan began fighting over the area in 1988; the struggle escalated after both countries attained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. By May 1994, when a trilateral cease-fire between Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Nagorno-Karabakh took hold, ethnic Armenian forces held not only Nagorno-Karabakh but also seven surrounding regions -

approximately 14 percent of Azerbaijan's territory. The economies of both sides have been hurt by their inability to make substantial progress toward a peaceful resolution.

Turkey closed the common border with Armenia in 1993 in support of Azerbaijan in its conflict with Armenia over control of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas, further hampering Armenian economic growth. In 2009, senior Armenian leaders began pursuing rapprochement with Turkey, aiming to secure an opening of the border, but Turkey has not yet ratified the Protocols normalizing relations between the two countries. In January 2015, Armenia joined Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan as a member of the Eurasian Economic Union.

COUNTRY FACTS (from the CIA World Factbook)

Border Countries (4): Azerbaijan 996 km, Georgia 219 km, Iran 44 km, Turkey 311 km

Climate: Highland continental, hot summers, cold winters

Terrain: Armenian Highland with mountains; little forest land; fast flowing rivers; good soil in Aras River valley

Natural resources: Small deposits of gold, copper, molybdenum, zinc, bauxite

Land use: 59.7% agricultural land; 15.8% arable land (1.9% permanent crops; 42% permanent pasture); 9.1% forest; 31.2% other (2011 est.)

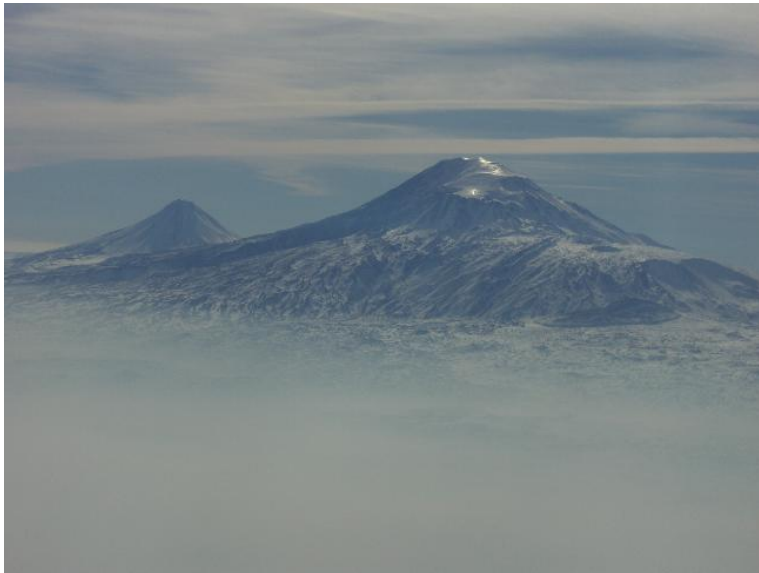
Population - distribution: Most of the population is located in the northern half of the country; the capital of Yerevan is home to more than five times as many people as Gyumri, the second largest city in the country

Natural hazards: Occasionally severe earthquakes; droughts

Environment - current issues: Soil pollution from toxic chemicals such as DDT; deforestation; pollution of Hrazdan (Razdan) and Aras Rivers; the draining of Sevana Lich (Lake Sevan), a result of its use as a source for hydropower, threatens drinking water supplies; restart of Metsamor nuclear power plant in spite of its location in a seismically active zone

Environment - international agreements: party to: Air Pollution, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Wetlands signed, but not ratified: Air Pollution-Persistent Organic Pollutants

Geography - note: Landlocked in the Lesser Caucasus Mountains; Sevana Lich (Lake Sevan) is the largest lake in this mountain range

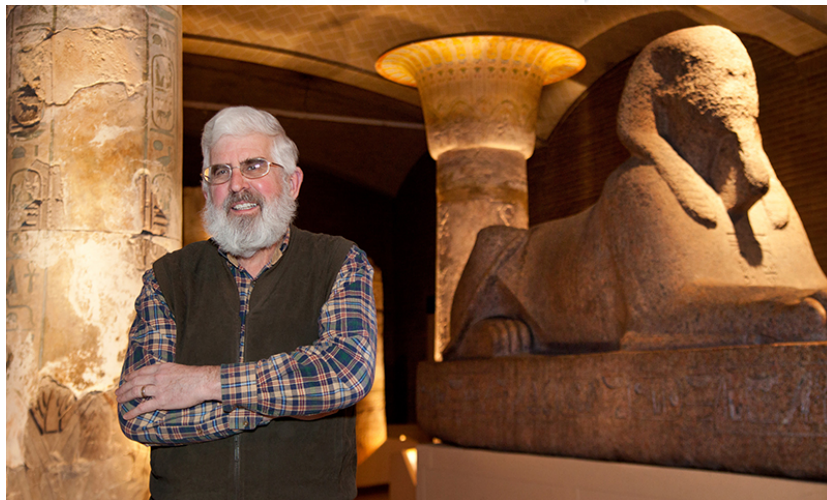


A view of Mount Ararat in western Turkey through the fog. The highest of its two peaks, Greater Ararat, is the tallest mountain in Turkey at 5,166 m (16,949 ft). Although located some 32 km (20 mi) from the Armenian border, the dormant volcano dominates the skyline of Yerevan, Armenia's capital.

WINEMAKING IN GEORGIA



UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM
of ARCHAEOLOGY and ANTHROPOLOGY



[Groundbreaking New Discovery Pushes Back Known Origins of Winemaking](#)

The history of winemaking and viticulture has been rewritten once again, thanks in part to **Dr. Patrick McGovern**, Scientific Director of the Biomolecular Archaeology Project for Cuisine, Fermented Beverages, and Health here at the Penn Museum. Dr. McGovern is lead author of a new paper based on findings in the country of Georgia, in the mountainous region of the South Caucasus, where two archaeological sites yielded Neolithic pottery that

was found to contain wine residues. Dating to ca. 6000-5800 BCE, these vessels represent the **earliest known examples of winemaking in the world**—pushing back the known origins of grape wine and viticulture by between 600 and 1,000 years.

News of the discovery has rippled across news outlets throughout the world:

- **Wine From Prehistoric Georgia With an 8,000-Year-Old Vintage**
The New York Times
- **Oldest Evidence of Winemaking Discovered at 8,000-Year-Old Village**
National Geographic
- **World's Oldest Wine Discovered in Georgia**
Condé Nast Traveler

Find out more about this history-changing discovery [on the Penn Museum's website](#).

End

INTERESTING READING AND VIEWING

(Georgia and Armenia) (from various sources including Delegation member suggestions)

Books:

- *“The Sandcastle Girls: A Novel”*, Chris Bohjalian
While this is a novel, it is very moving and informing about aspects of the Armenian genocide
- *“GEORGIA”, the essential guide to customs & culture*, Culture Smart
- *“The Girl King”*, Meg Clothier
- *“Georgia, Armenia, & Azerbaijan”*, Lonely Planet
- *“The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America’s Response”*, Peter, Balakian

DVDs/Videos

- You might be interested in viewing some of the many videos about Georgia on YouTube. Here is a short overview recommended by Tamar Tchelidze, MD, Counselor, Health, Science & Education: Aerial view of Georgia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdmLmWY2cK4>

ON THE WEB

Delegation Facebook Page, Caroline Olstad

<https://www.facebook.com/TheDelegationForFriendshipAmongWomen/>

Caroline asks that if you have photos or videos or anything else you would like to share, please send them her way. She also asks that you send any suggestions for other organizations that the Delegation can “like” to her as well. She will be updating the Facebook page periodically.
caroline.e.olstad@gmail.com

Delegation Website, Patti Kenyon

www.friendshipamongwomen.org

member password: women67

See interesting history over the past decades including countries we’ve visited, friendships we’ve made and photos from the many delegation trips and accomplishments.

Video on You Tube, Holly Jobe

I have posted the video that was shown at our final dinner in Mongolia on You Tube.

The link is at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUA0V6LzSal> or

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUA0V6LzSal&feature=em-upload_owner#action=share

You will need to copy and paste the link into a browser.

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

We realize that not every delegate is able to accompany the delegation on any particular trip, but, we offer a great opportunity to make a difference in the many lives affected in countries we visit by making a donation. We are currently focusing on Books for Africa in Rwanda to expand libraries and provide a library for the Goshora School. Additionally, we are assisting The Blue Water Lake Project in Mongolia (see article below). Such contributions allow all Delegation members the opportunity to participate in our efforts. Since the delegation is a 503C nonprofit organization, you can share your generosity while receiving a receipt that documents tax deductibility. We encourage everyone to join in and help make deeply needed improvements in Rwanda and Mongolia.

To donate, please send a check made out to The Delegation for Friendship Among Women, noting on the check which project you wish as a recipient. Donations should be mailed to:

**The Delegation c/o Mary Pomeroy
18926 Latigo Lane
Rio Verde, AZ 85263**

You will receive a receipt for tax purposes. Thanks for your help!!

DELEGATION TRIP UPDATES

MONGOLIA

Mary Wallace has stayed in touch with Tsetseglen Galbadrakh since we departed Mongolia and asked her for an update on Mongolia politics in their recent email exchange. Tsetseglen is the daughter of the head of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Gala Davaa, who we all met when we went to TNC office for a presentation. Mary thought you all would be interested in this excerpt.

On Oct 15, 2017

Dear Mary,

By way of an update on Mongolia. There was a presidential election in June/July, 2017. It was a very close election. In my view, it was an election between the coal lobby (group of wealthy families who acquired wealth and political power through corruption and acquisition of mining licences by abusing power) and the opposition to this consolidated corrupt group. This division is not along the party affiliation, the corrupt group has a strong presence in both the Democratic Party and Republican Party. And there is a small group of people both from democratic and republican party challenging this corrupt group, Thankfully, the opposition won. I think it was an election that was detrimental to Mongolia's future.

During the election, a video of the corrupt group's meeting planning to raise funds through illegal means was leaked by a whistle-blower to the public. The corrupt party sent the police to arrest the whistle-blower. Oyungerel protected the whistle-blower in her own home, as her husband is an American citizen, Mongolian police could not enter the premises with force.

Subsequent to the presidential election, there was a vote of non-confidence on the Prime Minister Erdenebat and his cabinet, as Erdenebat was appointed by the corrupt group. A new Prime Minister (Khurelsukh) was appointed 2 weeks ago and he is now in the process of forming his cabinet. Hopefully, he will choose to do the right thing for the country.

Mary Wallace also sent us a wonderful article on the Dukha people of the taiga in Mongolia. These are the reindeer herders and the smallest ethnic group in Mongolia. The article has some wonderful photos that I could not copy and insert for you here. The link is listed below. This is the same group that Sas Carey serves through NOMADICARE.

http://www.biographic.com/posts/sto/when-reindeer-cant-roam?utm_source=Daily%20Climate&utm_campaign=a17b0c68a7-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_12_18&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9c8bdfd977-a17b0c68a7-99365521

And a note from **Kim Harms**:

A number of Mongolian dentists are planning a trip to Minnesota and Maryland to learn more about increasing access to dental care for people with disabilities in June. This trip is dependent upon Government funding so we are still awaiting final word.

RWANDA

Kim Harms shared the following update:

We are just getting ready to send out a multi-library shipment of books to Rwanda which includes a generous contribution from McGraw Hill of new college test prep books for Gashora with a wonderful selection of leisure reading books from the University of Central Florida also for Gashora. The Delegation visited Gashora, a college prep school for academically talented young women from all over Rwanda. One of their graduates, Stella-Noella Tetero, contacted me about sending college test prep books to Gashora. The tests have changed recently which made her request even more important. She will be meeting with representatives from McGraw Hill to thank them personally for their donation. I will also email to you a small article about Stella-Noella. (**See below**)

We are also sending cooking and sewing books for Esther's Aide, referred to us by Mary Mattson Kenworthy's sister. Esther's Aide runs a very successful school that focuses on the extremely poor and victims of trafficking and teaches them hospitality, cooking, baking and sewing skills. Many of the graduates of Esther's Aide are being hired by Kigali's best hotels. Clare Effong was introduced to us by Mary Mattson Kenworthy's sister, Jane Rohman.

I asked all those who had mentees from Rwanda to update you on their progress. Holly is sending you a nice article and many others are still in touch. I will send you some updates from my mentee Sophie who has graduated and has a job.

I know there are others who still keep up with their mentee so perhaps we can encourage their sharing of stories!!

The following article from [Columbia University Home](#), [BulletinDirectory](#)



Rwanda's Stella-Noella Tetero Wants to Apply Nanotechnology to Help Conflict Survivors



Growing up in Kigali, Rwanda, Stella-Noella Tetero found that educating girls was not often valued. So at first, her interest in engineering was fueled by a desire to defy the norms and “prove her worth” by excelling academically, but she soon realized that engineering was one of her key passions in life. She organized a national public speaking competition for girls around the theme of African women and culture, and came to Columbia to pursue her education and chart a better future.

“I loved the fact that every piece of information I received raised more questions, and I wanted to be part of the people who try to find solutions,” Tetero says. “Finding these solutions often raises even more problems, but that is part of the beauty of engineering. Ways to make the world better still humble us as human beings who cannot fix all the flaws in the world.”

Drawn to Columbia by its core curriculum, opportunities to collaborate across disciplines, and location in New York City, Tetero was also attracted by the extensive support system for international students. She hopes in the future to assist chemical engineering faculty with research.

When Tetero isn't studying, she enjoys music, film, literature, and sampling new cuisines with friends. She's considering a career in nanotechnology, perhaps developing scaffolds that aid in regenerating skin tissue and that could help survivors of conflicts. She's also interested in treating cancer as well as the psychological toll it has on survivors.

“Being constantly surrounded at SEAS by such brilliant individuals in different fields instills a certain competition,” she says. “Not the bad kind of wanting to prove who has the upper hand, but the kind that brings out the best in each of us and makes us want to go as far as we can in whatever we're passionate about. Having professors willing to assist every step of the way encourages me even more.”

~ by Jesse Adams

A note from **Holly Jobe** with an update letter:

Hi All,

I just received this letter from Mardge Cohen, director of the WE-ACT AIDS program in Kigali (and the INEZA sewing cooperative). She updates the state of the programs in Kigali, and I thought you'd be interested.

January 15, 2018

Dear Friends:

It is wonderful to be back in Kigali (with my friends and colleagues here).

Our conversations mainly turn to discussions about how much there is to do to make things better here in Rwanda and in the U.S. I assure my friends and colleagues that a strong and committed group of people continue to join together to support them. I especially thank all of you whose donations allowed us to meet the \$40,000 year-end matching fund challenge from our friends at the Robert F. Meagher Charitable Foundation and members of the WE-ACTx Board. Your generous and sustained donations will help support our special Sunday children's support programs.

I joined both support groups yesterday. At St. Famille, music peers led the older youth group (16-18 year olds), in drumming, singing and moving with amazing energy and glee. More than 100 youth come twice monthly to enjoy the music, traditional dance, yoga and structured play, as well as participate in small group discussions about HIV, families and school. A new group of 19-22 year olds have been professionally trained as peer educators to lead these activities and groups.



The afternoon Sunday support group at Qadaffi Mosque now includes children up to 14 years of age. As there have been no new HIV-infected children born to women in the clinic for the last decade, there are now only 52 children, ages 12 and under, followed in the clinic (some have transferred in from other sites) with another 40 children under 14. This group enjoys a hip hop dance class, traditional dance, soccer, yoga and running games. Both groups conclude with a nutritious snack/meal. This week we also distributed school supplies for the new school year that begins January 22.

WE-ACTx for Hope (WFH), our official sister Rwandan organization, has been awarded a new grant from the Rwanda Centers for Disease Control (CDC). It will support some clinical positions as well as 2 new programs: 1) over 40 peers identified by nursing staff will each help monitor and provide support for 45 patients quarterly under the supervision of the psychosocial team; 2) contact tracing of recent partners (over last year) of WFH patients. These



initiatives will increase the work of all staff, but are welcome additions to assure retention in care and reduction of new infections. Pictured below is the first meeting of the peer patients.



We were privileged to be invited to attend the wedding of one of the KIP (youth adherence study) youth leaders Saturday morning. Rwandan weddings are big affairs. There are 3 parts, often held on different days. We attended the first part, called the “introduction.” The bride’s family (and friends) welcomes the groom’s family (and friends). Elder male members of the families represent the two sides. They banter with each other, to the amusement of the crowd, trying to get the upper hand on whether the groom meets the bride’s family’s standards to see if the family should agree to the marriage. They drink together several times and keep the crowd entertained. This is when the dowry is presented (previously the cow, now a check). Finally, the groom is introduced to the elders of the bride’s family and the bride appears and they sit together. Then the couple presents gifts to their family and special mentors. A Rwandan traditional buffet was served. The couple then left to prepare for the church wedding that afternoon and the reception that evening. Here are Nadine and Eric leaving the introduction ceremony.

A recent NPR story

(<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/01/10/577018509/rwanda-ranks-in-the-top-5-for-gender-equity-do-its-teen-girls-agree>) described the growth of a women’s debating team at Akilah Institute, which has a two-year accredited diploma program. Two youth leaders from WE-ACTx attend the school supported by scholarships and funding from our donors. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report now ranks Rwanda highly (4th in the world) because of government policies (women make up 60% of Parliament). Nonetheless, the story shares the voices of young women from the school discussing how gender roles are not equitable in daily life and how they are preparing to change this. It is always inspiring to hear how young people are engaged to keep moving things forward.

I guess we have finally “arrived” in Rwanda, as some of you may have noticed. The New York Times lists Kigali, Rwanda as one of the top 52 places to visit in 2018, and they just published 36 hours in Kigali (“a proud and progressive city that pulses with African charm” even as it tries to “reclaim its narrative 23 years after the horrific genocide”)

(<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/01/12/travel/what-to-do-36-hours-in-kigali-rwanda.html>).

The article mentions the Nyamirabo Women’s Center, an NGO sewing project combatting gender based violence, as a priority place to visit in Kigali, it should have also mentioned the WE-ACTx Clinic and Ineza, our amazing women’s income-generation sewing cooperative.

It makes me feel good to know that your itinerary included seeing first-hand the strong women who make the beautiful bags, place mats, and aprons that many of you have in your homes from your generous donations over the years.

Thanks so much for your support.

Mardge

312 925-5660

www.we-actx.org

Linda Lovas Hoeschler provided this update which was sent out by The Rwanda Embassy, Washinton, D.C.

BRIEF- RWANDA TODAY

- For the last 23 years, Rwanda has embarked on a steep journey to rebuild a nation all but destroyed by the 1994 genocide against Tutsi. The genocide left in its wake death, destruction, and despair. All socio-political institutions were left in shambles and Rwanda's infrastructure and economy lay in ruin. Most experts predicted the country would become a failed state, or at best be under a permanent UN protectorate.
- This grim picture forms the backdrop from which Rwandans and their leaders charted a new and bold course to rebuild their nation by creating their own road-map and models where non-existent. They designed home-grown solutions, with an emphasis on several key pillars. These included, but are not limited to: insuring peace and security for all Rwandans and their property, implementing and safeguarding unity and reconciliation, promoting rule of law, fighting against impunity, and using of new technologies to address socio-economic challenges.
- These concerted efforts made by the people and the government of Rwanda has yielded results across the board. The 2015 Rwanda reconciliation barometer indicates that the status of reconciliation in Rwanda is at 92.5% and the people's trust and confidence in national institutions of governance is on average over 90%; trust and solidarity among citizens is on average above 96%.
- Rwanda continues to engage in regional integration programs and has been a champion of the open borders' policy, allowing all Africans to travel freely to Rwanda, boosting the economic exchanges that the continent needs. The development of Rwanda is inextricably linked to the whole African continent. The drive for African cooperation, and the relentless efforts Rwanda has put forth to make it a reality have earned Rwandan President Paul Kagame the trust and respect from other African Heads of State and as a result have entrusted him with the task of spearheading the African Union Reform.
- In today's Rwanda, most structural barriers based on gender and ethnicity have been removed. Rwandan women participate and are leaders in all echelons of governance and leadership. More notably in the Parliament where Rwanda is a world leader in women representation with 64% women.
- Other groups of Rwandans such as the diaspora, are fully integrated in the development process of their country. Citizens' outreach has become institutionalized; President Kagame and all high level political leaders regularly visit citizens, in their villages and in various countries where they are located, to hear their voices and solve problems on ground.
- The recent Presidential elections in Rwanda showed to the world that Rwandans can determine and pursue the future they want. The request by the people for President Kagame to run again and the subsequent election of President Kagame by an overwhelming majority was an expression of the people's confidence and trust on his ability to take them to the level of their aspirations. The Independent Presidential elections observers hailed Rwanda's elections as transparent, peaceful, free and fair. The Heads of Mission of the three Election Observer Missions (EOMs); EAC, COMESA, and ICGLR said, "... the election was free and fair and that it was held in a peace and secure atmosphere..."

- They noted that the media, both public and private, played a crucial role in the campaigns by according balanced and equitable coverage to all the presidential candidates during campaigns in addition to highlighting the key policy issues that were at the heart of the campaigns. The electoral Observer Missions noted “the state-owned Rwanda Broadcasting Agency radio and television stations gave equal airtime to the three presidential candidates to market themselves to the electorate...”
- In international peace and security, not only is Rwanda the 5th major troops and police contributing Country, but is also a champion in the protection of civilians in conflict areas. 30 major troop and police contributing countries have so far endorsed Kigali principles on protection civilians in armed conflicts; a set of 18 pledges (principles) adopted in Kigali, Rwanda, by major troops and police contributing countries and partners, to implement certain best practices in peacekeeping.

Rwanda Media Barometer (2016):

- The Rwanda Media Barometer study findings indicate that, overall, the level of media development in the country stands at 69.6% (up from 60.7% in 2013 when the first media barometer was published). This represents an upward improvement of 8.9%—a figure also evidentially justified by the number of media outlets started since; laws enacted; the start of media self-regulation. In 2016, the Rwanda Governance Scorecard established that, 12 TV cables (1 public, 11 private) were on air in Rwanda. There were 36 radios, 80 online web based outlets, mainly private, community and civil Society Organizations (CSOs) owned.
- Most of the substantive explanation for these improved perceptions relate to the effect of the reforms that started in 2013 leading to the review of the media law; the creation of the self-regulation mechanism, the transformation of the state broadcaster to a public broadcaster, enacting access to information law and the increment of media outlets; especially television and radio stations as well as the increase in the web-driven media outlets and increased use of social media platforms and accessing news and information through telephony—a phenomenon that is expanding.

Human Rights

- The Rwandan constitution guarantees many basic rights and freedoms, including the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property. Democratic rights and freedoms are fundamental rights embedded in the constitution. The 2016 Rwanda Governance Scorecard indicated that performance indicator on political rights and civil liberties, was ranked “green” with an overall score of 81.83%; and its sub-indicators; democracy rights and freedom scoring over 83%; rights to media at 85.85%, and respect for human rights at 85.60%.
- Rwanda has ratified and domesticated all the major International and regional Human rights instruments. Rwanda has presented its report to the United Nations Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The Government openly and timely engages UPR Working Group and has subsequently demonstrated unwavering determination in the implementation of agreed recommendations in partnership with all stakeholders. The 2016

Rwanda Governance Scorecard, demonstrated that the respect for “core international human rights conventions” in Rwanda was at almost 98%.

FACT SHEET ON RWANDA

The world Economic Forum; Global competitive Index (2016-2017);

- The Global Competitive Index (2016-2017) and Africa Competitive Report (2017) ranks Rwanda as 3rd competitive economy in Africa (after Mauritius, South Africa), 52nd globally.
- The World Economic Forum, 2016 Global Gender Gap Report: Rwanda is ranked 5th globally and continues to be Africa’s top performer, and the only African country ranked in the global top 10, marking progress this year in women empowerment. The Global Gender Gap Report quantifies the magnitude of gender disparities and tracks their progress over time, with a specific focus on the relative gaps between women and men across four key areas: health, education, economy and politics. The report indicates that no country in the world has fully closed its gender gap, but four out of the five Nordic countries and, for the first time this year, Rwanda has closed more than 80% of theirs.

World Bank Doing Business Report (2017): Opportunity for all;

- Rwanda has been ranked 56th globally in the 2017 World Bank’s doing business report. Rwanda, ranks 2nd in Africa in Doing Business 2017.

World Bank; Africa Pulse (2017):

- The World Bank’s 2017 Africa Pulse Report put Rwanda among the seven (7) countries in Africa (alongside Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, and Tanzania) that continue to exhibit economic resilience, supported by domestic demand...

Africa Development Bank; The African Economic Outlook (AEO) 2017:

- The African Economic Outlook (AEO) 2017, indicates that Rwanda recorded the most progress in Africa in the fight against poverty since 2005, followed by Ghana and Liberia. One of Rwanda’s key efforts was a community-based health insurance system that by 2010 had covered nearly nine in 10 people.

The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI); 2017 Internet Affordability Report;

- The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) ranked Rwanda sixth (6th) in Africa and 21st globally with 61.48 per cent out of 58 low- and middle-income countries that were examined in the 2017. The Affordability Report is an annual report that examines the policy and regulatory frameworks that have allowed some countries to make broadband internet access more affordable, accessible, and universal, and what others can do to catch up.

•

World Health Organization; World Health Statistics (2016);

- The report ranked Rwanda 7th country in Africa with high life expectancy (66.1 years). Rwanda is ranked 9th in Africa with lowest Maternal Mortality ratio in 2015: Over the last 25 years, life expectancy in Rwanda has risen from an average of 23 in 1990-1995 to 63 years in 2010-2015. This improvement in life expectancy is a result of interventions over the past decade to fight against the leading causes of death in Rwanda, including malaria,

tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. It is projected that life expectancy will steadily improve to reach an average of 70 years by 2025-2030 period.

- Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel 2006-2014, Rwanda is ranked 9th in Africa, with 91% of births attended by skilled health personnel.

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation; Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG);

- The Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2016 Index Report of African Governance (IIAG), ranked African countries after assessing their performance in 4 categories: Safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity and human development. Rwanda is the 9th improver at the overall governance level over the decade. Of the top ten performing countries, only three countries – Namibia, Rwanda and Senegal – manage to improve across all categories of the IIAG.

Gallup: Global Law and Order report (2017);

- Puts Rwanda in the 10 countries a person is most likely to be safe. Global Law and Order report, is based on research from Gallup's World Poll, which offers leaders a glimpse of how close or far countries are from achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of "promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

The World Economic Forum, Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017

- The in-depth analysis of the Travel and Tourism competitiveness of 136 economies across the world ranks Rwanda, 9th safe and secure country for travelling.

~END~

Kelly Hayes-Raitt thought you all would be interested in this article from the Ohio State University, Ohio State News, published October 5, 2017.

Perpetrators of genocide say they're 'good people' Study examined testimony of defendants in Rwandan violence

By: [Jeff Grabmeier](#)

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The men who were tried for their role in the [1994 Rwandan genocide](#) that killed up to 1 million people want you to know that they're actually very good people. That's the most common way accused men try to account for their actions in testimony before the [International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda](#), a new study has found. Researchers examined more

than 10,000 pages of testimony from 27 defendants at the ICTR to determine how these men tried to explain their involvement in the genocidal violence.

They found that an “appeal to good character” was used by defendants more than all other explanations combined to say why they weren’t guilty of the horrible crimes they were accused of committing.

“Genocide has been called the crime of crimes, and these accused perpetrators very much understood that,” said [Hollie Nyseth Brehm](#), co-author of the study and assistant professor of [sociology at The Ohio State University](#).

“They were trying to protect their reputation. Rather than acknowledging their role, they emphasized what good people they were and talked about their good deeds and admirable character traits.”

Nyseth Brehm conducted the study with Emily Bryant of Boston University, Emily Brooke Schimke of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Christopher Uggen of the University of Minnesota. Their results appear online in the journal [Social Problems](#) and will be published in a future print edition.

In 1994, mass violence claimed up to 1 million lives in the East African nation of Rwanda. Most of the victims were Tutsi, killed by the majority Hutus. The United Nations created the ICTR and, between 1995 and 2015, 75 individuals were tried for planning and executing the violence. For this study, the researchers focused on 27 defendants, all men, who testified on their own behalf for one to 17 days. They were political leaders, military leaders or wealthy businessmen. Nearly all were indicted for complicity in genocide and either genocide or conspiracy to commit genocide. Within this sample, 19 defendants received sentences and eight were acquitted. Convicted defendants received sentence ranging from 12 years to life in prison.

The researchers analyzed the testimony using a [classic criminology theory](#) that suggests people use five specific techniques to neutralize their guilt and justify their participation in criminal activities. The techniques are denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, condemnation of the condemners and appeal to higher loyalties.

“When it comes to genocide, we like to think that the perpetrators are irredeemably evil, but they are not – they are psychologically normal people who are acting this way under social circumstances,” Nyseth Brehm said. “After it is over, perpetrators use these and other techniques to explain to their friends and family – and themselves – why they behaved the way they did.”

The findings showed that the defendants used only two of these techniques frequently: denial of responsibility and condemnation of the condemners (attacking those who criticize them). But they found two neutralization techniques that had not been identified before, one of them being appeal to good character.

“They argued that they were such good people that they couldn’t be guilty of genocidal crimes,” Nyseth Brehm said. “They often talked about how they actually saved Tutsis from the violence and advocated for peace.”

One defendant, talking about massacres near where he lived, testified, “I was saddened by that news as well as frightened.... I did not have enough means to act in that situation. However, I did not fold my arms. I did what I had to do and what I could do.”

Another way they asserted their good character was to say they had nothing against the Tutsis. “I never said the Tutsi are not full-fledged human beings,” one defendant said. “Rather than acknowledging the bad things they had done, the defendants often tried to talk about their traits and actions that proved what good people they are,” Nyseth Brehm said.

The other new technique the researchers identified was victimization. The defendants would talk about how they and their family and friends were targeted for being Hutus. One former mayor who was tried said, “I felt it was possible for me to die because I had been under permanent threat. I was being persecuted.”

While some Hutus were indeed killed in Rwanda, Nyseth Brehm said that nearly all the violence was targeted against Tutsis.

The researchers found that more than one-third of defendants used the victimization and appeals to good character techniques between one and 12 times per day of testimony. Defendants relied especially heavily on the appeal to good character technique – in fact, results showed that this technique was employed more than all the classic techniques combined. Why were these two new neutralization techniques not identified earlier?

Nyseth Brehm said most studies that have examined genocidal violence have tried to theorize what perpetrators were thinking before the crime. This study is one of the few to highlight their explanations after the crimes.

“We were looking not at what enabled them to commit the crime, but how they made sense of it afterward. How could they justify what they did?” she said.

In other research she has done in Rwanda, Nyseth Brehm said she has seen how people involved in genocide have dealt with their guilt in ways consistent with this study.

“A lot of the people I have talked to in Rwanda have to convince themselves that they are good people as a way to move forward. They have difficulty coming to terms with what they did.”

Editor’s note: Nyseth Brehm is in Rwanda until Oct. 18, 2017 continuing her research. She can do interviews by email or Skype while she is there.

EDITOR’S SIGN-OFF

Once again, I thank you all so much for your help with putting this newsletter together – for the suggestions, articles, references, and photos. Your feedback will also be very much appreciated. I would love to get updates from more delegates especially to follow up on

previous trips but also any personal news you would like to share with your fellow delegates. I know it helps me begin to know you all better. I look forward to traveling and working with you all in the future.

Susan McCraw Helms, Newsletter Editor
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