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## Diaspora Dialogues: Building bridges and learning from each other



Veronika Zonabend

Photo: UWC Dilijan

*Leaders of diasporas from many countries are gathering in Dilijan and Yerevan on October 8-10 to discuss the challenges and relevant issues of their communities and share ideas, strategies and inspirational stories.*

**Diaspora Dialogues** is organized by Common Purpose leadership development organization in cooperation with UWC Dilijan College and with support from Aurora Humanitarian Initiative.

“This event is the continuation of everything we do. Our main idea was to make Armenia a part of the world. For that purpose, it’s important to accept different cultures and views inside the country. The people who arrived to Diaspora Dialogues are prominent representatives of their communities. It’s also important they learn Armenia’s experience. The Armenian Diaspora has an opportunity to find out what difficulties people go through, learn from them and share their own experience,” said Veronika Zonabend, Co-founder and Chair of the Board of Governors of UWC Dilijan.

“Every person is unique. We all have our own values and the right to be proud of ourselves, our history and background. We should be able to respect that. Even if our views differ, we ought to be able to find common goals,” Veronika Zonabend noted.

Common Purpose Founder and Group Chief Executive Julia Middleton remarked that “Diaspora Dialogues is a unique opportunity to bring together exceptional leaders challenged boundaries their whole lives”.

Participants of Diaspora Dialogues are leading members of their communities in education, business, philanthropy and innovation, representatives of civil society and humanitarian organizations.

RVVZ Foundation’s Philanthropy Partner Pierre Gurdjian attached importance to organizing similar events in Armenia, a country with large diaspora worldwide.

“We are not alone. There are other nations with big diasporas and it’s interesting to learn how they formed and lived. It’s very important to gather them here in Armenia. Diasporas should perform as bridges between countries they came from and countries where they live. Building those bridges is both difficult and easy, but they play a significant role,” he said.