



ARMENIA

Joint submission by a Group of Civil Society Organisations* to the UN Human Rights Council 35th Session of the Universal Periodic Review (20 – 31 January 2020)

**Yerevan, Armenia
July 2019**

Part II

Preface

This is a joint submission by a coalition of civil society actors with extensive experience in monitoring, documenting and reporting human rights violations in Armenia. The report covers the following areas: **child rights and education; and health and social rights.** The report is prepared following broad consultations with all of the organisations and is based on the first-hand data collected during their monitoring and right protection work. The report is submitted on behalf of a group of civil society organizations by the Transparency International Anticorruption Center.

In 2014, a group of civil society organisations submitted the report on Armenia’s implementation of the UPR recommendations alerting that the situation reported during the previous cycle had not improved but continued deteriorating. The human rights and democratic governance principles and practices took a serious dive as the former President Serzh Sargsyan decided not to sign the Association Agreement with









the EU in 2013. Constitutional Amendments, adopted in 2015, institutionalised the decline of democracy and justice and took a heavy toll on anti-discrimination, anti-corruption and women's rights. The guarantees of certain rights (namely, right to liberty, sufficient living standards, healthcare, access to information, working conditions, social security, confidentiality of correspondence, right to fair trial, presumption of innocence and right to marry) overshadowed these critical changes and, most importantly, allowed Sargsyan, after his two terms as president, to claim the post of the prime minister, the highest office by the amended constitution. Moreover, right before the prime minister took office, a new legislation had been adopted granting the prime minister's office wide powers and minimising its accountability. The Police, National Security Service, Special Investigative Service, Investigation Committee, and State Control Service were to report solely to the prime minister.

Massive peaceful protests led by the opposition MP Nikol Pashinyan against Sargsyan's voting in as a prime minister resulted in Serzh Sargsyan's resigning from the office in April 2018, a week after the vote. In May 2018, following large-scale protests, the parliament elected Nikol Pashinyan as the prime minister. In December 2018, early parliamentary elections were held resulting in consolidating the results of the peaceful Revolution and the formerly ruling Republican Party of Armenia losing the legislative branch. Democratic changes in Armenia allow for higher expectations from the new government and the following report outlines the priority issues that should be resolved to reconcile with the human rights violations committed by the former government.









Since the Revolution in April 2018, some serious advancement has been registered in honouring and protecting rights. Specifically, for the first time in decades, Armenia had free and fair national elections, preceded by equally high-integrity Yerevan City Council elections. The right to freedom of expression and freedom of media have substantially improved in practice. The control over the Public TV broadcast substantially weakened. The authorities have declared and pursued zero tolerance towards corruption and have started addressing some systemic issues in a more systematic way by developing a robust anti-corruption strategy. There is a serious commitment of the authorities to improve the situation of mental health in the country by de-institutionalising the care and by securing the legal capacity of the patients. Palliative care has received government support and is expanding.






These democratic gains are encouraging. However, these are still thematic initiatives with limited intentions to institutionalise the change. Similarly, it is difficult to draw a clear and wholesome picture of the commitments taken by the new authorities with regards to human rights, as they have not published the new human rights strategy. Their inert position towards the right to be free from torture and ill-treatment and poor protection of the rights of LGBTI community representatives—a position characteristic to prior authorities—is concerning. To make the transition irreversible and to end systemic violations of human rights and impunity for such violations, systemic reform of the entire justice system, including prosecution and investigation services, penitentiary, and judiciary is urgently needed. And for this reform to be substantial and enduring, it should be informed by a profound revision of the past violations and of the state capture that allowed systemic injustice and corruption.

* Agate Rights Defense Center for Women with Disabilities NGO, Arena of Education NGO, Armavir Development Center, Center for Rights Development NGO, CineMart Youth NGO, Civic Development Educational and Research NGO, Civil Youth Center NGO, Ecological Right NGO, Ecolur Informational NGO, For Equal Rights Educational Center NGO, Gavar Civic Youth Center NGO, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly–Vanadzor, Helsinki Committee of Armenia Human Rights Defender NGO, Human Rights Research Center NGO, Institute of Migration and Social Changes, Institute of Public Policy, Iravates Club NGO, Journalists' Club Asparez, Khoran Ard Intellectual NGO, Martuni Women's Community Council NGO, Mission Armenia NGO, New Generation Humanitarian NGO, Open Society Foundations–Armenia, Pink Human Rights Defender NGO, Real World, Real People NGO; Social justice NGO, Spitak Helsinki Group Human Rights NGO, Transparency International Anticorruption Center, We Plus Social NGO, Women's Empowerment Center' NGO, Youth Avangard NGO, Youth Syunik Youth NGO.

| Name and acronym | Logo | Introduction about organization | Webpage Email Postal address |
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| Agate Rights Defense Center for Women with Disabilities NGO Agate NGO |  | “Agate” Rights Defense Center for Women with Disabilities non-governmental organization promotes the implementation and enforcement of civic, social-economic, educational, healthcare and cultural rights of girls and women with disabilities in Armenia through advocacy, information dissemination, awareness raising and collaboration. | http://agatengo.org/ agate@agatengo.org Baghramyan street, House 17, 3114, Gyumri, Armenia |
| Arena of Education NGO Arena NGO |  | “Arena of Educations” NGO aims to improve public education quality in Armenia, to fight against corruption in general and higher education system, to develop new and progressive educational methods. | www.shirakschools.am nadiaweplus@yahoo.com 31/75 Aram Khachaturyan street, 3126, Gyumri, Armenia |
| Armavir Development Center ADC NGO |  | Armavir Development Center is a community based non-governmental, non-profit organization registered and operating in Armavir region of Armenia. The mission of ADC NGO is collaboration for social-economic progress which aims to promote collaboration of public, private and business sectors of Armavir region. | http://www.armavirdc.org/ info@armavirdc.org armavirnaira@gmail.com Shahumyan street, 68a, 0901, Armavir, Armenia |
| Center for Rights Development NGO CRD NGO |  | The main goal of the organization is promotion and protection of human rights. Within the framework of its activities CRD implements: promotion of the realization of human and civil rights stipulated in the Constitution; legislation and practice analysis, elaboration and adoption of legal mechanisms and changes for protection of human rights in patient care; awareness-raising and educational activities including seminars for physicians, medical providers, legal professionals, NGOs and other stakeholders; contribution to development of healthcare related laws, as well regulations and legislation in line with international treaties, and other legal acts ratified by Armenia; development and dissemination of educational materials. | www.healthrights.am medlaw.info@gmail.com 3 H. Hakobyan street, Main building, 2nd section, 0033, Yerevan, Armenia |
| CineMart Youth NGO |  | CineMart Youth NGO is a civic youth educational non-governmental organization based in Vanadzor, Armenia. It implements wide range of educational, informative and cultural projects in northern Armenia. | Cinemartngo@gmail.com 4 street, House 38, Shahumyan, 2038, Vanadzor, Armenia |
| Civic Development Educational and Research NGO CDER NGO |  | Civic Development Educational and Research NGO aims to monitor local self-government system. The NGO implements monitoring projects in the fields of health and education. | civicdevelopment2019@gmail.com Narekatsi street, bld. 18/1, 3601, Yeghegnadzor, Armenia |
| Civil Youth Center NGO |  | Civil Youth Center NGO is based in Ijevan, Armenia. It aims to foster civil society, promote and protect human rights. The organization implements project to mobilize regional youth. | civilyouthcenter@gmail.com Ijevanyan 60, 4002, Ijevan, Armenia |
| Ecological Right NGO |  | Ecological Right non-governmental organization (EcoRight) was founded in 2012 (see organization’s Charter). Key features of the organization are outlined in its Charter. Organization’s activities are based on our approaches to economic, | http://ecoright.am info@ecoright.am Tel: +374 91451320 |

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| | | legal, environmental, health, cultural and other issues in the ecological context. | |
| Ecolur Informational NGO Ecolur NGO |  | Ecolur's mission is to increase the awareness of the public including officials, local communities, NGOs, business scientists, mass media about the environmental problems in Armenia. | www.ecolur.org ecolurpressclub@gmail.com 49/2 Hanrapetutyán street, 0038, Yerevan, Armenia |
| For Equal Rights Educational Center NGO For Equal Rights NGO |  | "For Equal Rights" NGO's mission is to promote the development of civic consciousness, enhancing values based on rule of law, creation of culture of discussions and debates by enlarging the opportunities of freedom of speech and pluralism. | www.forequalrights.org info@forequalrights.org 5, Asriev street, 0019 Yerevan, Armenia |
| Gavar Civic Youth Center NGO | | Gavar Civic Youth Center NGO is based in Gavar, Armenia. It aims to strengthen non-formal education, and protect rights of young people. It implements monitoring project in the fields local self-government, health and education. | gavarcenter@gmail.com Grigor Lusavorich street, House28, 1201, Gavar, Armenia |
| Helsinki Citizens' Assembly–Vanadzor HCAV NGO |  | Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor is a non-political, non-religious, non-profit NGO, which unites individuals who value the supreme principles of democracy, tolerance, pluralism and human rights. | https://hcav.am hcav@hcav.am 59 Tigran Mets street, 2001, Vanadzor, Armenia |
| Helsinki Committee of Armenia Human Rights Defender NGO HCA NGO |  | Helsinki Committee of Armenia has been conducting an on-going monitoring targeting children's rights in schools, free speech and pluralism of views, the right of socially vulnerable groups to free medical services and of persons with locomotor system's problems to be able to move around, safeguards for fair trial and air pollution and the right to health. | https://armhels.com info@armhels.com 3a Pushkin street, 0010, Yerevan, Armenia |
| Human Rights Research Center NGO HRRC NGO |  | HRRC's mission is to create a research platform in the sphere of human rights this way strengthening human rights protection in Armenia | https://www.rightsresearch.net/ hrecngo@gmail.com Abovyan, Armenia |
| Institute of Migration and Social Changes IMSC |  | IMSC's aims to contribute to migration policy development, promote evidence based and participative policy development, give a voice to silent migrant groups and communication of their needs to policy makers. | www.imsc.am alina.poghosian@gmail.com 35/2 Tbilisyan ave., apt. 15, 0091, Yerevan, Armenia |
| Institute of Public Policy IPP NGO |  | The mission of the organization is to promote and enhance transparent and accountable public policy through fostering human development, democratization, rule of law and good governance. | http://ipp.am info@ipp.am Hanrapetutyán 3rd lane, 8-13, 0010, Yerevan, Armenia |
| Iravates Club NGO | | Iravates Club NGO is an educational, human rights defending organization based in Hrazdan, Armenia. It aims to foster democratic participation, support transparency and good governance and monitor anti-corruption policies and local self-government system. | iravates@gmail.com Kentron taghamas, Ogostos 23 street, bld.26, 2301, Hrazdan, Armenia |
| Journalists' Club Asparez Asparez NGO |  | Asparez aims to protect freedom of speech, information and expression. The organization conducts anticorruption projects, observation of elections, empowers civic initiatives and activism, promotes transparent, accountable and participatory local government in Armenia. | www.asparez.am ; www.publicdata.am ; levon@asparez.am 96 Poushkin street, 3102, Gyumri, Armenia |

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| <p>Khoran Ard Intellectual NGO</p> <p>Khoranard NGO</p> |  | <p>Khoran Ard Intellectual NGO is based in Gyumri, Armenia. It implements youth and educational projects.</p> | <p>https://www.facebook.com/khoranard/ star@gyumri.am M. Mkrtchyan 38 a/1 Gyumri, Armenia</p> |
| <p>Martuni Women's Community Council NGO</p> |  | <p>Martuni Women's Community Council is based in Martuni, Gegharkunik. The organization aims to assist in resolution of social, healthcare and legal protection problems of single mother households through training, humanitarian assistance, advocacy and consulting.</p> | <p>http://martunicenter.am kananc7@gmail.com 8 Proshyan 1402 Martuni, Armenia</p> |
| <p>Mission Armenia NGO</p> |  | <p>Mission Armenia supports the most vulnerable members of Armenian society, particularly lone vulnerable elderly, refugees, disabled, and all those who are in extreme need of vital support. It contributes, through community-based social and healthcare services provision, to the solution of vital problems of vulnerable groups as well as to promote their secure and dignified life.</p> | <p>www.mission.am org@ngo.mission.am 42, Garegin Nzhdeh street, 0026, Yerevan, Armenia</p> |
| <p>New Generation Humanitarian NGO</p> <p>NGNGO</p> |  | <p>"New Generation" Humanitarian NGO is a non-governmental organization established in 1998 to promote the protection of human rights and advocacy of the society, access to health services and HIV prevention, provide material and non-material assistance to private individuals and legal bodies, and carry out various effective social initiatives. Its mission is to promote equality of rights, justice, diversity, dignity and well-being through protection of human rights and advocacy.</p> | <p>https://www.ngngo.net/en/infongngo@gmail.com 39 Tumanyan street, 0002, Yerevan, Armenia</p> |
| <p>Open Society Foundations–Armenia</p> <p>OSF-Armenia</p> |  | <p>Open Society Foundations—Armenia opened its doors in 1997 and has been supporting civil society working to promote justice, accountability, and transparency.</p> | <p>www.osf.am info@osi.am 7/1 Cul-de-sac, 2 off Tumanyan street, 0002 Yerevan, Armenia</p> |
| <p>Pink Human Rights Defender NGO</p> <p>PINK Armenia</p> |  | <p>"Pink" human rights defender non-governmental organization is a community-based LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) organization, which means the organization has been established by LGBT community, serves and supports the needs of the community, and promotes the LGBT persons' human rights protection process and advocates for the change of public policy around LGBT issues.</p> | <p>www.pinkarmenia.org info@pinkarmenia.org Aygestan 10 street, House 25/3, 0025, Yerevan, Armenia</p> |
| <p>Real World, Real People NGO</p> |  | <p>Real World Real People NGO promotes access to health services for people living with HIV and for vulnerable groups through community mobilization, capacity-building and protection of rights.</p> | <p>www.realwrp.com info@realwrp.com Hovsep Emin street, House 119/2 0012, Yerevan, Armenia</p> |
| <p>Social justice NGO</p> |  | <p>The mission of the organisation is to promote social justice principles and policies in the conduct of changes in Armenia. The organization participates in criminal justice reforms, child rights and in domestic violence spheres.</p> | <p>socialjusticengo@gmail.com 40, Demirjyan street, apt. 50, 0010 Yerevan, Armenia</p> |

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| Spitak Helsinki Group Human Rights NGO |  | The mission of “Spitak Helsinki Group” human rights NGO is the strengthening of human rights work in local, regional and national levels. “Spitak Helsinki Group” human rights NGO works in the following areas: human rights, civil initiatives, and protection of interests. | http://spitakhelsinki.org info@spitakhelsinki.org Shahumyan, 5/7, Spitak, Armenia |
| Transparency International Anticorruption Center |  | TIAC mission is to promote good governance in Armenia through reducing corruption and strengthening democracy. | https://transparency.am info@transparency.am 12 Saryan street, 5th floor, 0002, Yerevan, Armenia |
| We Plus Social NGO |  | “We Plus” social NGO provides information and practical assistance to vulnerable groups in Shirak region, Armenia. | weplus66@gmail.com 12/12 Trdat Chartarapet street, 3125, Gyumri, Armenia |
| Women's Empowerment Center' NGO |  | WEC's mission is to empower women living and affected by HIV-infection through capacity and leadership skills building with a special focus on their sexual and reproductive health and rights. | https://www.facebook.com/wecarmenia/ wec.arm@gmail.com Dro 15/47, 0069, Yerevan, Armenia |
| Youth Avangard NGO | | Youth Avangard NGO is founded in Armavir, Armenia. It aims to promote transparency, accountability and good governance in Armenia. | armavircenter.cyc@gmail.com Hanrapetutyanyan 29/5, 0901, Armavir, Armenia |
| Youth Syunik Youth NGO |  | Youth Syunik Youth NGO aims to promote democracy, rule of law and effective and accountable governance, protect freedom of speech, media and expression in Armenia. | eritasardsyunik@gmail.com M. Stepanyan 3 street, 3301, Kapan, Armenia |