

IHf FOCUS: freedom of expression and media; peaceful assembly; judicial system and independence of the judiciary; fair trial and detainees' rights; torture, ill-treatment and police misconduct; conditions in prisons and detention facilities; religious intolerance; conscientious objection; women's rights; homosexuals' rights.

In January Armenia was admitted to the Council of Europe. Prior to the accession the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council (PACE) made a number of recommendations for legislative and other reforms to be undertaken in the republic in order to strengthen democratic processes and the respect for human rights.² These recommendations, which the Government pledged commitment to, included the ratification of seven international treaties and the adoption of nine domestic laws within a period of one to three years.

During the year 2001, uneven progress was made towards the realization of the PACE recommendations. Most notably, the Government failed to ratify the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). This failure was explained by the fact that it had not been ensured that the provisions of the Convention and the republic's Constitution were fully compatible. However, in December, the Venice Commission published a report³, concluding that nothing in the ECHR or its protocols could be considered as contradicting the current Armenian Constitution. Accordingly, the Commission called on Armenia's Government to ratify these instruments. At the same time the Venice Commission noted that in order to allow for the ECHR to be effectively applied, it was imperative to enforce the scheduled constitutional reform without undue delay.

While designating the constitutional reform a top priority, the Government announced plans to organise a referendum on the matter in 2002. An ad-hoc committee was set up in the National Assembly to deal with the revision, and as of February 2002 this committee began discussing two drafts; one of them elaborated within the

presidential administration and the other presented by six political opposition parties.

In line with the PACE recommendations, the Government moved to sign a number of international conventions, including the European Social Charter, and initiated new legislation regarding a number of topics, for example elections, the media and an Ombudsman's office. However, the measures still lagged behind in relation to the deadlines set by the PACE.

Further, in its keenness to comply with the PACE recommendations, the Government in some cases rushed ahead, while overlooking fundamental democratic and human rights principles, and dismissing the need for a broad national dialogue on important legislative changes. In particular, draft legislation on the press and mass media met with serious criticism from observers due to its restrictive provisions.

In general, government operations suffered from a lack of transparency and public control, although a few positive steps towards increased co-operation with NGOs and media representatives were taken, for example regarding the development of poverty reduction strategies. The Commission on Human Rights functioning under the President remained largely passive and did not take any effective measures to address current human rights problems.⁴

Freedom of Expression and Media⁵

New Media Legislation

In accordance with one of the PACE recommendations, a new Media Law was drafted within the Ministry of Justice. In February 2002, the draft law was submitted to the Parliament. Although media representatives have for a long time called for a new Media Law to replace the vague and outdated one

from 1991, they do not approve of the draft: officially, it has been declared as corresponding to international standards, but in reality it contains provisions detrimental to the freedom of the media.

While so far it has been sufficient for the press to register with the authorities only once, the draft imposes a requirement on them to register for a license every year. The draft also provides for the establishment of a governmental body to oversee the activities of mass media. Journalists fear that this body would engage in virtual censorship. The critics of the draft law have concluded that it represents a setback rather than an improvement.

In October 2000 the National Assembly adopted a new Law on Television and Radio. This law turned the national TV and radio stations into public stations funded by the State. According to the law, special boards of directors were to oversee the operation and management of the public stations, with the President appointing the members of the boards. The law also provided for the establishment of a council to regulate the work of private TV and radio stations, and granted the President powers to appoint its members.

In its initial form the law contained several provisions that were dubious in terms of freedom of the media. In particular, the introduction of a complicated licensing system for private broadcast stations gave rise to concern. However, following active lobbying by media outlets and NGOs, the law was amended in September 2001. The amended version simplified the licensing procedures and extended the period of validity of a license from five to seven years.

Access to Information

There was no specific legislation on access to information, but the Constitution and several other laws guaranteed the right to receive and disseminate information. A study undertaken by the Civil Society Development Union (CSDU) showed that gov-

ernment officials often failed to grant access to information, which was supposed to be publicly available. Only five of 22 ministries responded to a written CSDU request for information within the time stipulated by law, and ten ministries gave no response at all. Government officials implied that they were reluctant to hand out information if they did not know for what purposes it was going to be used.

However, the main conclusion of the study was that government bodies did not have any developed mechanism for providing the public with information, and that its offices for public relations often did not possess the information requested, while they were unable to give advice on where it could be found. These conclusions were substantiated by a survey undertaken among 55 Armenian journalists⁶, which indicated that state officials who refused to hand out non-classified information most frequently cited reasons such as they did not possess the information requested, that they were not allowed to release it, or that it included state secrets.

◆ Achilles, an NGO defending drivers' rights, requested the Ministry of the Interior to provide statistics on police behaviour towards drivers, including fines imposed and registered cases of misconduct. As the NGO received a rude written response, in which it was stated that the information requested was none of its business, its representatives filed a complaint with a court. According to the court ruling, the Ministry of the Interior was not obliged to provide the NGO with all the information requested, but should have given an appropriate answer and directed the NGO to the source where the information could be obtained. Following the ruling, the Ministry of the Interior exhorted Achilles to contact the State Department for Statistics in order to get the requested information.⁷

Article 70 of the Criminal Code penalized the publishing of classified information, and media outlets that published ma-

terial considered to contain state secrets could have their activities suspended for up to three months. The 1996 Law on State Secrets listed four broad categories of classified information; military, international, economic and intelligence information, without providing sufficient details on the content of the categories. Given that the vague definitions could cover a wide range of information, the law encouraged arbitrary implementation and self-censorship among journalists.⁸

Libel and Defamation

According to Article 208 of the Criminal Code, publicly insulting authorities with regard to their conduct during official duties was punishable with fines or up to one year of corrective labour. The provision contradicted the European Court of Human Rights jurisprudence, which establishes that public officials are expected to endure broader public criticism than private persons.

The Draft Law on the Press and Mass Media proposed by the Government also contained the notion of defamation by prohibiting journalists to publish information “harmful to a person’s integrity or business”. It was believed that this provision would encourage media outlets to exercise self-censorship in order to avoid pressure from authorities and powerful businessmen.⁹

◆ On 23 March, Vahan Ishkhanian, a journalist working with the opposition newspaper *Haykakan Zhamanak*, was summoned to the Regional Prosecutor’s Office in Yerevan and told that the main shareholder of the Converse Bank, Smbat Nasibian, had demanded that he be charged with defamation for a 21 February article entitled “Corruption and the Personnel of the President”. In the article, Mr Ishkhanian claimed that Mr Nasibian had given a presidential advisor a jeep worth about 70,000 Euro in return for certain services. Further, he asserted that, due to these services, the Converse Bank had

been able to obtain a monopoly of the currency exchange at the Zvartnots airport and full power over the offering of financial services to the state aviation company. In the end no criminal case was brought against Mr Ishkhanian.¹⁰

Coverage of the 1999 Terrorist Attack on the National Assembly

Throughout the year journalists faced harassment by authorities for different reasons. However, the repressive measures relating to the trial on the October 1999 terrorist attack in the National Assembly displayed particular characteristics. During this attack terrorists stormed the Parliament building and shot dead Prime Minister Vazgen Sargssain, Parliamentary Speaker Karen Demirchian as well as two vice-speakers and three deputies. The trial commenced in 2000 and continued in early 2002.

Shortly before the trial started the authorities announced that only 60 journalists would be accredited for the hearings, while no other spectators would be granted access. The decision was motivated on the grounds of the lack of space in the courtroom. Further, on the first day of the hearings, the Minister for Justice, David Haroutiunian, said that certain restrictions would apply to the media coverage of the court sessions due to the extreme importance of the case. In particular, the media were prohibited from publishing verbatim accounts of testimonies made during the course of the trial. Media representatives considered the announcement an attempt to obstruct detailed and exhaustive reporting on the trial. The court itself, however, refrained from imposing any regulations on the media coverage of the hearings.¹¹

◆ In early May, Shogher Matevossian, editor-in-chief of the highly critical weekly *Chorord Ishkhanutiun*, was summoned to the Military Prosecutor’s Office, where she was requested to disclose the authors of a critical article related to the 1999 terrorist act. Ms Matevossian refused to do so, ar-

guing that the she alone was responsible for the article. Later, eight tax police officers conducted an unsanctioned audit in the weekly's office. They confiscated several documents and interrogated its accountant for four hours. Ms Matevossian was also pressurized into writing down a declaration dictated by the police officers. The Ministry of State Revenues claimed that the audit had revealed serious irregularities in the weekly's accounts and requested Ogostos, the agency that owned and published it, to pay 8 million drams (approximately 16,000 Euro) in indemnity. Ogostos responded by bringing a case against the Ministry citing the illegality of the tax audit as well as the unreasonableness of the indemnity requests. On 4 January 2002, a court decision satisfied the suit. However, the Ministry appealed the verdict. At the time of writing, the appeal case was pending.¹²

◆ In the night of 26 June, the workshop owned by Vahagn Ghoukassian was set on fire. As a free-lance journalist, Mr Ghoukassian had written a brochure called *The Observer's Version*, where he linked the perpetrators of the 1999 terrorist attack to Armenian authorities, in particular the President, the Minister of National Security and high-ranking officials of the Ministry of the Interior. In two articles written in June, published in the opposition newspaper *Haykakan Zhamanak*, he also presented evidence suggesting that a special military subdivision of the Ministry of National Security had been involved in the terrorist attack. Mr Ghoukassian and his family had repaired leather products in the workshop, which was burnt down, an occupancy constituting their only stable source of income. Prior to the arson attack, Mr Ghoukassian had received an intimidating phone call from an anonymous person, who referred to the death of a well-known publicist in uncertain circumstances. He was also arrested and beaten by officers of the

Ministry of the Interior when *The Observer's Version* was initially distributed.¹³

Peaceful Assembly

Freedom of assembly was guaranteed by Article 26 of the Constitution. However, in practice, the authorities did not always respect this provision.

◆ On 9 May, law enforcement officials prevented a concert in honour of the Victory Day from taking place. The concert was to be organised by the humanitarian NGO Novaya Armenia, which works with street children. The law enforcement officials confiscated the organisers' technical equipment for about half an hour, and returned it only on condition that the concert be cancelled. The NGO had reportedly been granted permission for the concert. However, the officers that put an end to it said that it would disturb a classical music concert in the nearby Chamber Music Hall, where the guests included the Prime Minister's wife.¹⁴

◆ On 7 September, the opposition National Democratic Alliance organised a demonstration against the introduction of a method of per-minute payment for telephone calls in Yerevan. As the participants gathered in the Liberty Square, troops from the Ministry of the Interior arrived at the place. Armed with clubs and shields, the troops prevented the demonstrators from proceeding to the presidential palace. In the evening more than 15 plain clothed officials of the Ministry of the Interior forcefully entered the home of Petros Makeyan, chairman of the Democratic Fatherland political party, saying that they wished to clarify some issues regarding the demonstration. As the officers were unable to produce any arrest warrant, Mr Makeyan refused to go with them. Following a heated dispute, the officers attacked Mr Makeyan in the presence of his 17-year-old daughter. Having searched the apartment, the officers took Mr Makeyan with them and left.

Four hours later it became clear that he was being held in detention in the Arabkir Department of Internal Affairs. Only the following day, court decisions sanctioning Mr Makeyan's arrest as well as the search of his home were issued. Mr Makeyan was detained for a total of ten days for violating administrative regulations on the organisation of demonstrations.¹⁵

Judicial System and Independence of the Judiciary

The judiciary remained largely dependent on the executive. In particular, the procedure for appointing judges and the system for monitoring the activities of courts provided the executive with powerful mechanisms for exercising influence on the judiciary.

Judges were appointed by a three-stage procedure. After examining the qualifications of applicants, the Ministry of Justice drew up a list of candidates. This list was submitted to the Council of Justice, which was composed of judges, prosecutors and research lawyers but chaired by the President and vice-chaired by the Minister of Justice, for comments. The President made the final appointments.

The Council of Justice was also charged with overseeing the activities of courts by examining complaints filed against judges. No official information on the number of complaints dealt with by the Council or the decisions reached by its members were published. According to unofficial sources, the Council examined 585 complaints in the year 2000.¹⁶

The PACE recommendations made prior to Armenia's accession to the Council of Europe stressed the necessity of reforming the judicial system in the republic so as to guarantee its independence. In particular, the PACE exhorted the Government to undertake a reform of the Council of Justice within three years of accession.¹⁷ A reform of the Criminal Code lagged behind sched-

ule, which meant *inter alia* that the death penalty remained in force.

Public attitudes towards the judicial system were markedly adverse. A national survey conducted by the Armenian Sociological Association indicated that over 80% of the population did not have confidence in judges.¹⁸ In a survey from 1999¹⁹ the respondents labelled the judiciary as the most corrupt state structure, and in a survey from the year 2000²⁰, 69% of the respondents said that, if a dispute they were involved in could not be solved between the parties, they would under no circumstances take it to court.

The physical conditions of courts were also miserable. The buildings were in extremely poor condition and the judges often cited poor working conditions when attempting to justify mistakes in their work.

Fair Trial and Detainees' Rights²¹

Suspects were frequently not informed of their rights, in particular the right to legal counsel. Detainees who invoked this right were only granted access to a lawyer after official permission had been received from the investigator. Law enforcement officials often did not send any official notice to persons they wished to interrogate but summoned them only orally.

Meanwhile the status of witnesses remained problematic. The legislation in force failed to grant witnesses the right to refuse to be interrogated unless a lawyer was present. Interrogators used this legal loophole to call suspects as witnesses and pressure them into signing confessions. Judges usually left complaints about coerced confessions un-investigated; they simply asked the interrogator if any irregularities had taken place, and accepted his/her denial of this and dismissed the defendant's complaint. There were also cases where witnesses who refused to reiterate statements they had made under duress were threatened with charges of acting as false witnesses.

The parties in court did not enjoy equal procedural rights. While generally the prosecutor's word was trusted, defence lawyers had to provide a large amount of evidence in order to convince the court of the innocence of their clients. Sometimes the verdicts handed out were outright arbitrary, thus strengthening suspicions of corruption on the part of judges.

On 12 June, the National Assembly announced an amnesty to mark the 1700th anniversary of the adoption of Christianity as Armenia's state religion. In addition, a considerable number of prisoners had their sentences reduced. In total, some 2,000 prisoners were affected by the amnesty.

◆ On 18 May, the Appeal Court for Criminal and Military Affairs slightly reduced the seven-year prison sentences handed down in December 2000 to former Minister of Education, Ashot Bleyan, the leader of the opposition party Nor Ughi, and former head of the educational complex named Mkhitar Sebastatsi. He was found guilty of embezzlement and abuse of power. Both trials were marred by serious violations of due process standards. While no substantive evidence against the suspect was presented, he was denied the right to an effective defence, including legal counsel. During the appeal case trial, armed troops from the Ministry of the Interior were present in the courtroom. In July Mr Bleyan was released on the basis of Article 49 of the Criminal Code, which allows the release of a prisoner who has served a third of his/her prison sentence. Human rights organizations judged the case to be politically motivated.²²

Torture, Ill-treatment and Police Misconduct

Police officers continued to resort to excessive use of force and physical abuse when interrogating suspects or persons summoned as witnesses. Typically the perpetrators were not brought to justice.

◆ In October, Robert Khachatryan was arrested twice on suspicions of theft and beaten up by officers from the Khorerdayin police station in Yerevan before being released. Further, in late October, one of the police officers who had participated in the beatings approached Mr Khachatryan in the street, forced him into his car and took him to a desert outside the city, where he threatened to shoot him unless he confessed to the theft or agreed to work as a police informant. As a result of the police torture, Mr Khachatryan contracted a spinal injury, which was documented by a doctor. Encouraged by the Armenian Helsinki Association (AHA), he requested the regional prosecutor to bring charges against the police officers at the Khorerdayin police station. However, after being interrogated by the prosecutor, Mr Khachatryan stated that he had sustained his back injuries by falling and thus withdrew his request for charges.²³

During the year a case of brutality involving the bodyguards of the President also caused public indignation.

◆ In the night of 25 September, Poghos Poghosyan, a 43-year old Georgian citizen of Armenian origin, was found dead in the toilets of a café in Yerevan after he had allegedly used insulting language against the Armenian President who had visited the café the same day. According to a British witness, the President's bodyguards beat him in the toilets. Police officers present in the café did not intervene in the attack. Later, a case was opened against only one of the several bodyguards, and in January 2002 the hearings started in the Nork-Marash Court. During the trial a written statement by the British witness was dismissed because of "the poor quality of translation". On 21 February 2002, the court ruled that Mr Poghosyan had died as a result of a brawl between him and the bodyguard against whom charges had been brought, and handed out a two-year

suspended prison sentence to the body-guard for accidentally causing another person's death (Article 103 of the Criminal Code). The relatives of Mr Poghosyan said that they would appeal the verdict.²⁴

Conditions in Prisons and Detention Facilities

In accordance with the PACE recommendations prior to Armenia's accession to the Council of Europe, a process to transfer the penitentiary system to the control of the Ministry of Justice rather than it being subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior began on 1 October. The Government also decided to allocate 151,1 million drams (approximately 300,500 Euro) for the construction of a prison hospital for prisoners infected with tuberculosis. The agreement on the project was signed between the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Ministries of the Interior, Justice and Health. According to official statistics, there were about 4,000 inmates infected with tuberculosis in Armenian prisons at the end of 2001. However, the AHA claimed that the real number was much higher.²⁵

During the year the CSDU and a co-operating organisation carried out a monitoring programme involving all pre-trial isolation facilities in the republic. It was the first time that the authorities had permitted such monitoring. On the basis of the monitoring, the organisation concluded that certain rights granted to detainees in the 1968 Regulation on Pre-trial Detention were not properly implemented. For example, in violation of Article 13 of this Regulation, detainees had not been allowed to correspond with their relatives: they could do so only by bribing the staff.²⁶

The CSDU believed that the main reasons for the prevailing situation were ignorance among the detainees of their rights and the Soviet type approach still cherished by law enforcement officers to exclude detainees from the outside world. The vague-

ness of the relevant legislation was also seen as contributing to the situation.

Although Article 12 of the Regulation guaranteed detainees the right to receive visitors, visits were only organised in exceptional cases in many of the pre-trial facilities. For example, only 3 to 4 visits were reported to have taken place annually in the Vanadzor facility, which holds 110 inmates. A survey among detainees and their relatives indicated that 40% had never even tried to get authorisation for a visit, with 36% of these believing that no visits were allowed by law before a verdict had been handed out, and 30% claiming that there were no prospects of a positive response to a request for a visit. Both the experience of other detainees and information from the administration of the detention facilities were cited as sources for the opinions held. Defence lawyers pointed to the same explanations for failures to request visits.²⁷

Religious Intolerance²⁸

Article 1 of the 1991 Law on Freedom of Conscience, Worship and Religious Organisations guaranteed freedom of worship and religious belief as well as free choice and exercise of religion. There were 45 registered religious organisations in Armenia, representing the main world religions. The Armenian Apostolic Church held the status of national church and enjoyed special privileges.

While Article 7 of the above-mentioned Law permitted all registered religious organisations to do charity work, Article 17 granted this right exclusively to the Armenian Apostolic Church. A similar legal inconsistency applied to the building of places of worship: while all registered religious groups were granted the right to have places of worship, only the Armenian Apostolic Church was allowed to build new churches.

According to Article 13, religious groups, whose spiritual centres were outside Armenia, were prohibited from receiving financial support from abroad.

Article 17 stated that other religious communities apart from the Armenian Apostolic Church could only worship within their own buildings, and were prohibited from organizing religious activities in schools, kindergartens or penitentiaries.

From the beginning of the 2000 autumn semester an obligatory course on Christianity was introduced in secondary public schools. On 17 March 2000, the Government and the Armenian Apostolic Church signed a so-called Memorandum of Understanding, aimed at providing the basis for a later agreement between the two parties to grant even more privileges to the church.

During the year a re-registration of all religious organisations took place. According to the Law on Freedom of Conscience, Worship and Religious Organisations, a community needed 200 signatures to be registered. Some smaller communities, whose members have increasingly had to leave the country due to religious intolerance, failed to meet this requirement.²⁹

The authorities also continued to refuse to register the Jehovah's Witnesses, although the community had about 17,000 members. Allegedly this was mainly because male members of the community refused to serve in the military. However, the members of the community, like members of other non-traditional communities, also faced other forms of harassment and discrimination. Minority members were, for example, dismissed from their jobs, or beaten up on the streets, with the perpetrators going unpunished. In a few cases criminal charges against church leaders were brought on spurious grounds.

◆ On 6 June, the senior investigator of the Armavir Regional Prosecutor's Office opened a criminal case against Levon Margarian, an elder of the local Jehovah's Witnesses community and deputy chairman of the National Council of Jehovah's Witnesses. The charges were brought under Article 244.1 of the Criminal Code (in-

fringement of the rights and freedoms of citizens under the guise of exercising freedom of religion) and were motivated by the participation of twelve children in a religious ceremony organised by the community. According to Mr Margarian's lawyer, the children had written permission from their parents to attend the service. This was the first time in 20 years that Article 224.1, which carries imprisonment of up to five years, was applied in Armenia. On 17 September Mr Margarian was acquitted. An appeal by the Prosecutor's Office of Armavir was pending at the end of 2001.³⁰

◆ On 13 July, some 30 armed police officers confiscated all movable property owned by the Yerevan Charismatic Church. Four days later, the 46-year-old female pastor, Shogher Khachatryan, was arrested and detained for three months in the isolation detention facilities of the National Security Ministry. During the detention Ms Khachatryan was refused the right to contact her family and church. She was charged with swindling and as of the end of the year the case was pending. Ms Khachatryan denied the charges.³¹

Conscientious Objection³²

On accession to the Council of Europe, Armenia made a commitment to adopt a law on alternative military service within three years. The PACE also recommended that all conscientious objectors be released and allowed to carry out community service as soon as adequate legislation had been adopted.³³ However, while a number of conscientious objectors were released under the general August amnesty, 59 new conscientious objectors were sentenced to prison in 2001. As of the end of the year, sixteen Jehovah's Witnesses were imprisoned for refusing to carry out military service on religious grounds. Four young Jehovah's Witnesses were in detention awaiting trial.

Women's Rights³⁴

According to the women's NGO Tsovinar, women were subjected to persistent discrimination in the fields of labour and education, while domestic violence remained a grave problem.

In the labour market discrimination of women took *inter alia* the form of employers refusing to hire women who were engaged or recently married while citing fears that they would become pregnant and thus be unable to continue working. Elderly women also had great difficulties in finding a job, and women rarely occupied leading positions. Traditional attitudes often prevented girls from completing secondary education and, in particular, higher education.

The authorities typically belittled the problem of domestic violence. According to various surveys, domestic violence occurred at all levels and in all parts of society, although it was sustained by factors such as economic hardship, unemployment and alcohol abuse. The most fundamental reason for domestic violence was that women's place in society was still perceived as being subordinated to men, first to their fathers and brothers, later to their husbands, and finally even to their sons.

Homosexuals' Rights³⁵

Relations between persons of the same sex remained criminalized, and were punishable with up to five years imprisonment according to Article 116 of the Criminal Code. Raids against homosexuals

reportedly took place. Police officers arrested homosexuals in their homes or at their work places and coerced them into naming homosexuals in high-ranking positions, who represented convenient targets for blackmailing. Typically the homosexuals also had to pay bribes in order to avoid being detained. In addition, they had private belongings, including photos, confiscated. According to the AHA at least two raids were carried out during the year.

Some officials within the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of National Security reportedly recruited representatives of sexual minorities as informants. The targeted homosexuals were called to the departments where the officials were working and requested to sign a document stating that they were ready to cooperate with the government bodies and that they would provide any information in their possession that could harm the national security of the republic. When the persons summoned refused to comply with the request they were threatened with negative repercussions, ranging from having their sexual orientation revealed to their relatives and employers to criminal prosecution on the basis of Article 116 of the Criminal Code.

During the year seven homosexuals were murdered and it was believed that they were killed due to their sexual orientation. In a particularly brutal case in September, a homosexual actor with the Giumri theatre died as a result of fifty stabs.

Endnotes

¹ This chapter is based on information to the IHF from two main sources: Civil Society Development Union (CSDU) and the Armenian Helsinki Association (AHA). Contact information: CSDU, Artak Kirakosyan (President), 31 Moskovyan Str., apt.19, Yerevan 375002, Armenia, tel/fax: +374-1 53 32 83, mobile +374-9 40 36 09, e-mail csdu@csdu.am, www.csdu.am; AHA, Mikael Danielyan (Chairman), apt. 11, Papazian 24, 375012, Yerevan, tel: +374-1 536-797, tel/fax: 374-1 533-099, mobile: +374-9 417-113, e-mail mike@arminco.com, www.hahr.am

² The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), *Opinion No. 221*, 2000.

- ³ The European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Opinion on the Ratification of the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms under the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia of 1995*, 15 December 2001.
- ⁴ The introduction is based on information from the CSDU
- ⁵ Unless otherwise noted, based on information from the CSDU.
- ⁶ Association of Investigative Journalists of Armenia, "Armenian Mass Media and Media Environment from the Point of View of Journalists", 2001.
- ⁷ AHA
- ⁸ CSDU and AHA
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- ¹⁰ AHA
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid and CSDU
- ¹⁶ Sara Petrossyan, Association of Investigative Journalists, January 2002.
- ¹⁷ PACE, op.cit.
- ¹⁸ Armenian Sociological Association, Survey on Citizen Participation, 2001.
- ¹⁹ Carried out by the CSDU on public perception of corruption.
- ²⁰ Conducted by Versus.
- ²¹ Based on information from the AHA.
- ²² AHA and CSDU
- ²³ AHA
- ²⁴ CSDU
- ²⁵ AHA
- ²⁶ See CSDU and Union for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty and Prisoners, *Report on the Monitoring Survey Conducted in Pre-trial Detention Facilities August-October 2001*.
- ²⁷ CSDU
- ²⁸ Unless otherwise noted, based on information from the CSDU.
- ²⁹ AHA
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ Keston News Service Summaries 17-21 September, 12-16 November, 2001.
- ³² Based on information from the AHA.
- ³³ PACE, op.cit.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid.