



PRESS RELEASE

22 June, 2016

Yerevan

of the “Corruption Risks in the Field of Free Competition” Anti-Corruption Event

On June 22, 2016, the Armenian Lawyers’ Association, in cooperation with the CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition of Armenia and the Freedom of Information Center, organized an anti-corruption event entitled *“Corruption Risks in the Field of Free Competition”* in Gavar town. The event was aimed at revealing corruption risks in the field and outlining respective solutions.

The event was organized in the scope of the “Multi-Faceted Anti-Corruption Promotion” project funded by the EU and co-funded by the OSCE Office in Yerevan. Representatives of state bodies, business organizations and associations, mass media and civil society organizations, as well as the experts of the “Multi-Faceted Anti-Corruption Promotion” Project attended the event.

In his welcoming speech Mr. Karen Zadoyan, the President of the Armenian Lawyers’ Association (ALA) and the Coordinator of the Secretariat of the CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition of Armenia mentioned that there are several monopolistic companies in the food market but it is impossible to clearly distinguish which company has a monopoly and a dominant position as the beneficial owners are not revealed and this information is not available to the public.

The representative of the Gegharkunik Regional Administration and the Deputy Mayor of Gavar, Mr. Grigor Boshyan, gave welcoming speeches as well, stating that it is important that the President and the Government demonstrate political will to fight against corruption.

The welcoming speeches were followed by reports and presentations on the corruption risks in the field of free competition, efficient mechanisms of fighting corruption, implemented reforms and upcoming activities, as well as possibilities for cooperation with CSOs in this field.

Mr. Arman Yeremyan, the Director of the “Crepson” Company, made a particularly remarkable statement. The company he runs has dealt with market monopoly and corruption risks when it submitted a project proposal in the scope of the State Program for Fertilizer Subsidies which provides an opportunity of saving about 990 million AMD. With this project, high quality potassium phosphate fertilizers would be imported for an affordable price. However, the project proposal was rejected as another company which had a monopoly in the market emerged. The businessman found Minister of Agriculture Sergo Karapetyan directly responsible for this. Mr. Karen Zadoyan stated that the CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition of Armenia would be persistent in giving a solution to this problem and will protect the businessman’s rights.

During active discussions problems existing in the field were raised and solutions were proposed. The respective suggestions will be systematized and presented in the Anti-Corruption Council.

The project aims to increase the role of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in promoting anti-corruption reforms and their implementation. In the framework of the project the capacity of CSOs and the media to engage in monitoring and watchdog activities will be built. Anti-corruption training workshops will be organised throughout Armenia with the purpose of enabling CSOs and media organisations to better comprehend the issues related to anti-corruption and freedom of information. These activities aim at deepening the existing opportunities for carrying out anti-corruption activities. Small grants will be given for raising the effectiveness of public monitoring and implementation of appropriate monitoring, watchdog and investigative activities. A sustainable dialogue between CSOs and the Government will be developed with the participation of CSOs, to strengthen the anti-corruption institutional mechanisms.

The project is funded by the European Union and co-funded by the OSCE Office in Yerevan. It is implemented by the “Armenian Lawyers’ Association” NGO – Applicant and “Freedom of Information Center” NGO – Partner. The project duration is 3 years (January 2014 – December 2016) and the budget is 650,000 EUR, of which 585,000 EUR was contributed by the EU and 31,117 EUR was contributed by the OSCE Office in Yerevan.

Armenian Lawyers’ Association (ALA) was established in 1995 with a Mission to promote to the establishment of the rule of law, democracy and formation of the civil society in Armenia, where the people are aware of their rights and where their rights are protected. Before February 2016, ALA was called Armenian Young Lawyers Association.

Freedom of Information Center (FOI) operates over 10 years. The Mission of FOI is to promote application of the RA Freedom of Information Law, contribute to the transparency and openness of the Armenian government system and to stimulate civic society’s involvement in the governance system.

For more information please contact Mrs. Narine Karapetyan, the PR Coordinator, on business days from 9:00-18:00. Tel.: 540199; Fax: 580299; URL: <http://www.armla.am>.



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The European Commission is the EU’s executive body.

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The Project is co-funded by the OSCE Office in Yerevan.
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The OSCE Office in Yerevan has been operating since 1999, and its mission is to support Armenia in developing its democratic institutions and strengthening civil society, acting in the areas of legislative reform; combating corruption and trafficking; environmental activities; raising awareness for human rights; media freedom; gender equality, etc.



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