

PRESS RELEASE

12 October, 2016

Yerevan

of the “Problems of Increasing Transparency in the Declaration System of High-Ranking Officials’ Income, Assets and Their Related Persons, as well as the Reforms Implemented” Anti-Corruption Event

On 12 October, 2016, the Armenian Lawyers’ Association, in cooperation with the CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition of Armenia and the Freedom of Information Centre of Armenia, organised in Vanadzor an anti-corruption event entitled “Problems of Increasing the Transparency in the Declaration System of High-Ranking Officials’ Income, Assets and Their Related Persons, as well as the Reforms Implemented”. The event was aimed at revealing the corruption risks in this field and outlining respective solutions.

The event was organised 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 from the Commission on Ethics of High-Ranking Officials, civil society, mass media, the Armenian Lawyers’ Association, including the experts of the “Multi-Faceted Anti-Corruption Promotion” Project, participated in the event.

The opening remarks were followed by presentations. Member of the Commission on Ethics of High-Ranking Officials Mr. Artak Sargsyan found the introduction of an electronic declaration system very important. Vice-President of the Commission Mr. Armen Khudaverdyan emphasised that the electronic system ensures the transparency of the Commission’s activities, adding, “... We reply to all our letters electronically and any citizen can send us inquiries”.

Another member of the Commission Mr. Edgar Shatiryan suggested on behalf of the Commission that a transition should be made from the income and asset declaration system to an asset and interest declaration system, that the scope of the declarable information should be expanded as a result of reviewing the scope of related persons and that the data of the latter should be included in the very declarations submitted by high-ranking officials.

Local Expert of the “Multi-Faceted Anti-Corruption Promotion” Mr. Marat Atovmyan attached great importance to the participation of civil society in the activities of the Commission and thus proposed to establish an NGO Council adjacent to the Commission.

Iravaban.net journalist Mr. Gevorg Tosunyan spoke about the role of the registry of declarations in the field of journalism. In order to ensure the transparency of the declarations he suggested to indicate the scope of persons who give donations, add a provision on the production year of the car (when declaring movables), indicate the price when buying expensive assets, as well as to declare high-ranking officials’ expensive vacations and flights.

The presentations were followed by a productive discussion. The questions referred to transparency and conflict of interests issues in the declaration system, as well as officials’ entrepreneurial activities, etc.

The recommendations, after being summarised in the event report, will be sent for consideration to the RA Government, the RA Ministry of Justice and the Commission on Ethics of High-Ranking Officials, which will lead to the implementation of reforms in the field.

The main goal of the “**Multi-Faceted Anti-Corruption Promotion**” project is 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 has been enhanced. Thus, 100 CSOs and media organisations have strengthened their understanding of corruption issues and freedom of information as well as their ability to monitor and engage in watchdog activities. Small sub-grants have been allocated to 20 CSOs and media organisations for raising the effectiveness of public monitoring and the implementation of appropriate monitoring, watchdog and investigative activities. In 2014 the CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition of Armenia was established in the scope of the project. The Coalition now comprises more than 80 CSOs and media organisations and plays a key role in the sustainable CSO-Government dialogue developed in the scope of the project. The joint work of the Government and the Coalition on the issues of the criminalisation of illicit enrichment and the establishment of an independent anti-corruption agency in Armenia has been a particularly remarkable achievement in the scope of the project.

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) has been operating for 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 PR Coordinator Mrs. Narine Karapetyan on business days from 9:00 to 18:00. Tel.: 540199; Fax: 580299; URL: <http://www.armla.am>.



The Project is funded by the European Union.

Delegation of the European Union to Armenia
Tel.: +37410 54 64 94
Fax: +37410 54 64 95

The European Commission is the EU’s executive body.

“The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.



The Project is co-funded by the OSCE Office in Yerevan.
Tel.: +374 10 229610
Fax: +374 10 229615

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.



Armenian Lawyers’ Association
Address: 7 Nalbandyan Str., Suite 2, Yerevan, Armenian, 0010
Tel.: +37410 54 01 99
Fax: +37410 58 02 99



Freedom of Information Center
Address: 1/3 Buzand Str., Yerevan 0010, Armenia
Tel.: +37410 56 03 60
Fax: +37410 56 03 60