



## **Joint Statement on the Launch of the Human Rights Action Plan**

We, the representatives of the United Nations, the Delegation of the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Council of Europe, would like to commend the Government of Armenia for adopting the Human Rights Action Plan, and for reaffirming the fundamental importance of protecting human rights for all the people of Armenia.

The Action Plan represents an important milestone and serves as a roadmap for coordinated action by public institutions towards fulfilling Armenia's international human rights commitments and obligations.

We applaud this first attempt to bring a wide range of human rights issues under one umbrella.

We acknowledge that the Action Plan is a living document that will undergo revisions and amendments throughout its lifecycle. Moving forward, we urge the Government to continue expanding the scope of the plan and take stronger steps aimed at the elimination of all forms of discrimination, prevention of torture and ill-treatment, advancement of equality between men and women, and ensuring respect for human dignity, media pluralism, freedom of expression and assembly. We welcome the fact that the Plan recognizes the need to strengthen the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups and urge the Government to step up efforts in this direction to ensure equal rights and opportunities for all.

This is a key opportunity to demonstrate real accountability, and assign specific responsibilities to achieve progress in human rights. We therefore encourage the Government to take immediate action, for example, towards setting up a comprehensive legal framework against discrimination. It is important also to establish specific targets and timelines, for example, for creating a system for effectively investigating incidents of torture and ill-treatment.

Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are also essential for any Plan to ensure accountability, track progress and identify areas for revision. And finally, the effective implementation of this Plan will certainly require the allocation of appropriate human and financial resources and the full participation of local and regional authorities, civil society, human rights advocates, and the public at large.

We reiterate our willingness to support the Government in its essential mission to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights of each and every citizen of Armenia.