



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
2012

OSCE/ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT

30 January – 1 February 2012



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**REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, 2012**

OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report

I. INTRODUCTION

In anticipation of an official invitation to observe the upcoming 2012 parliamentary elections and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) undertook a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) to Armenia from 30 January to 1 February. The NAM included Nicola Schmidt, Deputy Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Department, and Raul Mureşan, OSCE/ODIHR Election Adviser.

The purpose of the mission was to assess the pre-election environment and the preparations for the elections. Based on this assessment, the NAM should recommend whether to deploy an OSCE/ODIHR election-related activity for the forthcoming elections, and if so, what type of activity best meets the identified needs. Meetings were held with state institutions, the election administration, and the judiciary, as well as with representatives of political parties, the media, and civil society. A list of meetings is included as an annex to this report.

The OSCE/ODIHR would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the OSCE Office in Yerevan for their assistance and co-operation in organizing the NAM. The OSCE/ODIHR would also like to thank all of its interlocutors for taking the time to meet with the NAM.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the upcoming elections, 131 National Assembly deputies will be elected under a mixed electoral system for five-year terms. Ninety deputies will be elected under a proportional system in a nationwide constituency and a further 41 in single-mandate constituencies under a majoritarian system.

The primary law governing the upcoming elections is the recently amended Electoral Code. A recent joint opinion by the OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission noted that it includes a number of positive amendments, addressing previous recommendations. At the same time, it would benefit from further improvement in order to ensure full compliance with OSCE commitments. Although the new code has the potential to allow the conduct of democratic elections, legislation alone cannot ensure this. It is its proper and equally applied implementation by all stakeholders that remains the key challenge

All parliamentary parties indicated that they will contest the elections separately. According to OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, the campaign is expected to be heated and focused on recent requests from opposition parties to change the electoral system, ongoing investigations into the March 2008 events, and the lack of dialogue between governing and opposition parties. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, mainly from the opposition, expressed concerns about possible multiple voting, the misuse of administrative resources, and pressure on businesspeople supporting opposition parties.

Elections are administered by a three-tiered system, comprising the Central Election Commission, 41 Constituency or Territorial Election Commissions, and some 2,000 Precinct Election Commissions. Administrative preparations for the upcoming elections appear to be well under way.

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed various degrees of confidence in the election administration bodies, ranging from a complete lack of trust to the belief that the electoral commissions will work in a fully professional, transparent and accountable manner. For the first time, it will be possible to download voter lists from the internet. Opposition representatives expressed concerns to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM regarding potential misuse of voter lists.

The media environment was characterized by several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors as partisan. The National Commission on TV and Radio (NCTR), the body responsible for supervising the coverage of the election campaign by broadcasters, informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that each day it will randomly monitor eight stations out of the 90 broadcasting in the country. It is still not determined how the NCTR will monitor the Public Television and Radio, which has specific duties during the official campaign period.

In line with previous recommendations made by OSCE/ODIHR, as well as the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe (GRECO), campaign finance regulations have been strengthened through the introduction of clear reporting deadlines, among other issues.

The Electoral Code provides for election observation by candidates, party proxies, non-governmental organizations, and international observers. The code requires that all domestic observers receive a qualification certificate based on a CEC administered test. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors voiced concern that the test is an administrative obstacle. In addition, civil society representatives raised concerns regarding changes to the code that may have a negative impact on their observation activities. Civil society representatives informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM they will undertake a number of projects for the upcoming elections, including campaign finance monitoring, media monitoring as well as election day observation in all polling stations.

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was welcomed by all interlocutors, who considered an OSCE/ODIHR election observation activity essential. This is due to the lack of confidence expressed by many NAM interlocutors in the electoral administration, as well as accusations of media bias and possible manipulations, including on election day. On the other hand, the authorities clearly stated their intention to hold transparent elections in line with OSCE commitments for democratic elections. Political parties from the government and the opposition both expressed their lack of trust towards each other. The NAM, thus, recommends the deployment of an Election Observation Mission (EOM) according to the standard OSCE/ODIHR methodology, contingent upon the receipt of an official invitation from the authorities. The EOM should include a core team of experts, 24 long-term observers and 250 short-term observers.

III. FINDINGS

A. BACKGROUND

Armenia's National Assembly (*Azgayin Zhoghov*) is a unicameral body comprising 131 members, elected for five-year terms. The current government is a coalition between the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA), "Prosperous Armenia" (PA), and the Rule of Law Party (RLP). It is led by Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan (RPA). Two other parliamentary parties – the Armenian Revolutionary Federation/*Dashnaksutyun* (ARF) and the Heritage Party (HP) – are in opposition, as is the Armenian National Congress (ANC), a coalition which includes 13 opposition parties.¹ The political

¹ This includes the People's Party of Armenia, the Republic Party, the Armenian National Movement, the Social-Democratic *Hnchak* Party, the Conservative Party, the Democratic Way Party, the Alternative

climate is characterized by a strong distrust between government and opposition. This is reflected in their expectations about the upcoming elections.

OSCE/ODIHR has observed seven elections in Armenia since 1996.² The last observed election was the presidential election in 2008. At the time, the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission (EOM) stated that, “while the 2008 presidential election mostly met OSCE commitments and international standards in the pre-election period and during voting hours, serious challenges to some commitments did emerge, especially after election day. This displayed an insufficient regard for standards essential to democratic elections and devalued the overall election process. In particular, the vote count demonstrated deficiencies of accountability and transparency, and complaints and appeals procedures were not fully effective.”

B. ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Elections to the National Assembly are held under a parallel mixed electoral system. Ninety deputies are elected proportionally in one nationwide constituency. Additionally, the country is divided in 41 single-mandate constituencies, each returning one deputy under a majoritarian electoral system.

The primary law governing the elections is the Electoral Code (amended on 26 May 2011). The legal framework encompasses a number of other laws, including the Constitution, the Law on Political Parties, the Civil Procedure Code, the Criminal Code, the Law on the Constitutional Court, the Administrative Procedures Code, the Law on Conducting Meetings, Assemblies, Rallies and Demonstrations and the Law on Television and Radio Broadcasting, as well as decisions and regulations of the Central Election Commission (CEC).

At the request of the National Assembly, OSCE/ODIHR carried out a joint legal review of the amended Electoral Code, together with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission).³ The joint opinion concluded that there have been a number of positive amendments, addressing previous Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR recommendations. Amendments, such as the provision of a judicial remedy for all electoral disputes, inclusion of quotas for women on electoral commissions, clarification on providing assistance to voters in polling stations, and broadening the definition for what may be cause for an election to be invalidated, all improve the legal framework for elections.

At the same time, the Opinion stated that the Electoral Code would benefit from further improvement in order to ensure full compliance with OSCE commitments, Council of Europe and other international standards for the conduct of democratic elections. Areas which could be addressed include: removing excessive restrictions on candidacy rights; ensuring a separation of state and party/candidate structures; allocation of seats to the parliament; critically assessing the use of new voting technologies for out-of-country voters; improving provisions for the counting and tabulation process, including determination of election results; and improving complaint and appeal procedures to better ensure an effective remedy. Although the new code has the potential to allow the conduct of democratic elections, legislation alone cannot ensure this. It is its proper and equally applied implementation by all stakeholders that remains the key challenge.

Political-Civil Initiative, the Democratic Fatherland Party, the Progressive Liberal Party of Armenia, the Christian-Democratic Revival Party, the Liberty Party, the Armenian Fatherland Party and the Human Rights - 96 Party. See <http://www.anc.am/en/aboutANC/members>.

² For all previous OSCE/ODIHR reports on Armenia, see <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/armenia>.

³ [http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2011/CDL-AD\(2011\)032-e.pdf](http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2011/CDL-AD(2011)032-e.pdf).

While governing parties and officials praised the new Electoral Code, opposition parties and civil society representatives expressed concerns on how the code will be implemented in some of its provisions. These include the formation of election commissions,⁴ the transparency of the work of the election commissions, the accreditation of domestic observers, possible de-registration of observer organizations, the adjudication of complaints and appeals by the judiciary, as well as the video-taping of voting and counting activities by observers and proxies.

C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Elections are administered by a three-tiered system, comprising the CEC, 41 TECs in ten *marzes* (provinces) and the city of Yerevan, and some 2,000 PECs. The CEC is responsible for the overall conduct of elections. It is a permanent, independent, and professional body, composed of seven members appointed for six years by the President upon the nominations from the Human Rights Defender (three members), Court of Cassation (two) and Chairperson of the Chamber of Advocates (two). The nominees of the latter two must be of different gender and at least one candidate in each group must have a legal or science-related degree. All current CEC members, three women and four men, were appointed in 2011.

TECs are also permanent, independent, and professional bodies. All voting Armenian citizens may apply to become TEC members, pending certain professional criteria and the requirement that they not “carry out public social and political activities”.⁵ The CEC appoints the 41 TECs for a six-year period. Each TEC has seven members, of which at least two should represent the other gender. At the time of this report, TECs had some 12 vacant positions.

The CEC Chairperson informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that the CEC secretariat is fully staffed and that the CEC has all the required financial resources to administer the upcoming elections. According to the CEC, its meetings are open to the public and are announced on its website.

The CEC is training potential PEC members, domestic observers and political party proxies.⁶ Each trainee has to pass a test in order to be certified. The trainings are not mandatory, and a person can take the test directly. The PEC trainings are to conclude in the second half of February. It is unclear if and how the CEC will provide training on the legal provisions, decisions and procedures expected to be issued in the period leading up to elections.

Thus far, the CEC has passed 80 decisions⁷ and issued a number of guidelines and handbooks, including for observers, proxies, TEC and PEC members, on administrative procedures related to elections, and for the visually impaired. To ensure co-ordination, the CEC will also issue a calendar of activities once the elections are officially announced. The CEC informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that for e-voting by diplomatic personnel and their families residing abroad, it will publish the source codes for the programmes to be used. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM is not aware of any civic and voter education training programmes to be undertaken by the CEC.

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed variable degrees of confidence in the election administration bodies, ranging from a complete lack of trust in their impartiality and independence to

⁴ For the first time, the CEC and TEC members are to be professionally rather than politically appointed.

⁵ Article 41 of the Electoral Code.

⁶ At the time of this report, the CEC received 48,404 applications for professional training on holding elections (from 6 political parties and 9 non-governmental organizations). Of those, 34,932 attended the training and 32,046 passed the examination.

⁷ One complaint was filed against one of the decisions.

the belief that the electoral commissions will work in a fully professional, transparent and accountable manner.

D. VOTING RIGHTS AND VOTER REGISTRATION

All Armenian citizens over the age of 18 on election day are eligible to vote. Citizens declared incompetent by a court as well as those serving a criminal sentence in a penitentiary institution are not entitled to vote or to stand as a candidate.

Voter lists include all citizens registered in a given community with suffrage rights. Special voter lists are prepared by heads of penitentiary institutions and pre-trial detention facilities, commanders of military units, and heads of inpatient healthcare facilities. Voters who expect to be away from their place of permanent residence on election day can request an absentee voting certificate no later than seven days before election day. This allows them to vote at any polling station in the country.

The voter registration system is passive and the voter register is based on the State Population Register, maintained by the Passport and Visa Department (PVD) of the police. This department submits voter registers by community to the CEC twice a year: in June and November. By law, all citizens must maintain a registered address. Currently, the PVD checks on voters without declared addresses in person (visits were ongoing and were expected to be concluded by mid-February).

Forty-one days before election day, the PVD submits the preliminary voter list by electoral precinct to the CEC.⁸ This is an electronic document and the CEC is to post it on its website 40 days before election day. The information should be 'searchable'. In 2012, it will also be possible for the first time to download the data, including the name of the voter, patronymic, date of birth and address.⁹

Citizens are entitled to file applications with the PVD to correct inaccuracies in the voter lists (including those relating to individuals other than the applicant). The final voter list, to include requested changes, is issued two days before election day. It should be posted on the CEC's website and at each polling station. The latest voter list from 3 November 2011 included 2,473,667 voters.

Several interlocutors expressed concerns to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM about possible misuse of voter lists. They alleged that several hundreds of thousand of voters living out of country are still on the voter lists and have in the past appeared as having voted after election day because of multiple voting through bussing of voters to different polling stations.¹⁰

E. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

The CEC registers candidates for the proportional race, which can be nominated by political parties (or a party alliance). For the majoritarian races, TECs register candidates nominated by parties, alliances, as well as those who are self-nominated.¹¹ Such individuals must have the right to vote, be over 25 years old, not hold the citizenship of another state, and have been an Armenian citizen for the previous five years with a permanent residence in the country during this period.

⁸ The precincts can change for each election. One precinct has up to 1,000 voters.

⁹ Some interlocutors expressed concerns over the publication of voters' addresses, which they consider to be personal data.

¹⁰ By law, Armenian citizens living out of country for more than six months should inform the respective consulate and be de-registered from their address in Armenia.

¹¹ Article 106.1 states that judges, prosecutors, military personnel, police officers, and other categories of civil servants may not stand.

The number of candidates of each gender in a list must not exceed 80 per cent of each numbered group of five candidates. Candidate lists must include a minimum of 25 candidates.

Under the Electoral Code, parties or alliances registering lists for the proportional race must make a financial deposit.¹² For the majoritarian races, the candidate deposit is lower.¹³ This deposit is returned if the candidate is elected (proportional system) or receives more than five per cent of votes (majoritarian system). Many political party representatives expressed concerns to the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that these amounts are high and restrict their ability to field candidates.

The registration of a candidate or list of candidates can be revoked on three grounds: first, by court decision in case a previous warning on campaign regulation violations has not been complied with; second, for violations of campaign procedures by a candidate or list of candidates that “essentially affect[ed] the results of the elections”; third, where a candidate or list of candidates has used funds outside of the specified electoral account or in excess of 10 per cent of this account (see below).

F. ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND CAMPAIGN FINANCING

The official campaign starts 28 days before election day and lasts until the day before election day. According to OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, some political parties are already campaigning, particularly in the electronic media. The campaign is expected to be heated and focused on recent requests from opposition parties to move to a purely proportional electoral system, ongoing investigations into the March 2008 events, lack of political dialogue between governing and opposition parties, and ongoing accusations of abuse of administrative resources by the governing parties. It is expected to be personality-based rather than focused on programmatic platforms. All parliamentary parties indicated that they will contest the elections separately.

In line with previous recommendations made by OSCE/ODIHR, as well as the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe (GRECO), campaign finance regulations have been recently strengthened.¹⁴ Contestant must open a special bank account through which all campaign funds must pass. Funds can comprise donations from voters, contestants’ personal funds, and party donations.¹⁵ Foreign and anonymous donations are not allowed by law. There are spending caps established by law for the various contests.¹⁶ Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, mainly from the opposition, expressed concerns about pressure from authorities on businesspeople supporting opposition parties.

The CEC’s Oversight and Audit Service (OAS) is responsible for overseeing finance rules, both for the campaign and for parties’ regular activities. Contestants must submit three declarations on incomes and expenditures to the body.¹⁷ Within two days of receipt, the OAS checks financial data

¹² 8,000 times the minimum salary or some EUR 509,950. The minimum salary is some 64 EUR. At the time of writing the official exchange rate was approximately EUR 1:AMD 512.

¹³ 1,000 times the minimum salary or some EUR 63,740.

¹⁴ [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/round3/GrecoEval3\(2010\)4_Armenia_Two_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/round3/GrecoEval3(2010)4_Armenia_Two_EN.pdf)

¹⁵ Respectively, 100-times the minimum salary, 1000-times the minimum salary (applicable to majoritarian races), and 2,000-times the minimum salary per candidate for majoritarian races and 15,000-times per party or coalition for the proportional race.

¹⁶ Candidates in majoritarian contests can spend no more than 10,000-times the minimum salary, while political parties or alliances in the proportional contest can spend a maximum of 100,000-times the amount.

¹⁷ On the 10th and 20th day of the official campaign period, as well as no later than 3 days before the end of the period for announcing the election results.

and submits to the CEC, which will also post it on its website. The CEC may fine contestants that do not comply with the rules. In some cases, infractions may lead to deregistration.¹⁸

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed that Transparency International will monitor campaign finance, public procurement, and possible misuse of administrative resources during the elections.¹⁹

G. MEDIA

The media environment was characterized by several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors as partisan and tabloid-orientated. Television is the predominant source of political information, with one public and some 90 private channels. Although there are a number of national and regional newspapers in circulation, their distribution is limited.

Freedom of expression is guaranteed by the Constitution. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM), however, expressed concern over the growing number of civil libel suits filed against news outlets, calling upon the authorities to reform legislation to adequately protect media in such cases.²⁰ In May 2010, RFOM welcomed the decriminalization of defamation as a significant step towards ensuring a media-friendly environment. Since then, however, some 30 suits have been brought against newspapers and journalists, including 11 in 2011. Compensation sought is often disproportionate with the damage allegedly inflicted, according to RFOM. In a 15 November 2011 ruling, the Constitutional Court ruled that media cannot be held liable for “critical assessment of facts” and “evaluation judgments.” It instructed courts to avoid imposing hefty fines on media outlets in civil libel suits, saying that written corrections or other non-material compensation should suffice.

Political parties contesting the elections have the right by law to free and paid airtime on Public Television and Radio *HI*. They can also purchase airtime on private broadcasters.²¹ Both public and private broadcasters are legally obliged to present impartial and unbiased information on the election campaign of candidates and parties, including in their news programmes. Print media funded by the state bodies are obliged to ensure non-discriminatory and impartial conditions for electoral contestants during the period of the campaign.

The National Commission on TV and Radio (NCTR) is responsible for overseeing the electoral campaign on broadcast media, based on a methodology submitted to the CEC 20 days after the elections are called. NCTR is to publish and submit its findings to the CEC three times during the election.²² NCTR informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that it will monitor eight stations out of the 90, which will be randomly chosen every day. It is not clear how NCTR will monitor the public broadcaster, which has specific duties during the campaign period. In case of violations, NCTR can issue a warning or require redress.²³ In case of non-compliance, NCTR can impose fines or suspend transmission until a decision of a court in the matter.²⁴

¹⁸ If the amount spent outside the election account exceeds ten per cent of the election account, the court is entitled to cancel registration.

¹⁹ <http://transparency.am/project.php?id=154>.

²⁰ <http://www.osce.org/fom/85336>.

²¹ The price per minute of paid air time is to be published and may not exceed the average cost of commercial advertising in the six months preceding the calling of elections and may not be changed during the campaign.

²² On the 10th and 20th days of the election campaign, as well as 2 days prior to the announcement of final results.

²³ Article 58 of the Law on Television and Radio Broadcasting.

²⁴ Fines can range between 100 to 500-times the minimum wage.

Representatives from the public broadcaster informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that they are satisfied with the legal framework and that they are committed to ensuring neutral and balanced coverage of the elections, both in quality and quantity. The public TV will cover the election campaign with political ads in special electoral programmes during primetime (18:00 to 24:00) and in its news programmes. It has yet to determine whether it will broadcast candidate debates.

In a project funded by the European Union and implemented by the OSCE Office in Yerevan, domestic non-governmental organization will conduct media monitoring of the upcoming elections.

H. ELECTION OBSERVATION

The Electoral Code provides for election observation by candidates, party proxies, non-governmental organizations, and international observers. Article 30 requires that all domestic observers have a qualification certificate based on a test, to be issued by the CEC. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors voiced concern that the test and the procedures are an administrative obstacle to domestic observation. Specifically, they noted that in comparison to previous elections, observers have to be identified earlier, test questions are not necessarily relevant to observation activities, and application procedures are too burdensome.

In addition, civil society representatives raised concerns regarding two changes from the previous Electoral Code. The first is Article 30.5 of the revised Electoral Code, based on which the CEC can deregister an observer organization if one of its observers is deemed biased.²⁵ The second change is the elimination of Article 30.6, which granted observers immunity from prosecution for expressing opinions about the electoral process.²⁶

In previous elections, OSCE/ODIHR EOMs faced certain difficulties in that certain state authorities interpreted the law to mean that Armenian citizens working as national support staff were acting as international observers. The new Electoral Code has addressed this issue.

Civil society representatives informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that they will carry out a number of projects during the upcoming elections. In addition to Transparency International's campaign finance projects, "It's Your Choice" plans to deploy some 2,000 observers on election day, one per polling station. The Armenian Helsinki Committee also plans to deploy a number of observers.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was welcomed by all interlocutors, who considered an OSCE/ODIHR election observation activity to be important during the upcoming elections. ODIHR's presence was regarded as essential for the perception of the electoral process. This is due to the lack of confidence expressed by many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, especially from the opposition and civil society, in the process and in the electoral administration, as well as accusations of media bias and possible manipulations, including on election day. On the other hand, the authorities clearly stated their intention to hold transparent elections. Political parties from the government and the opposition both expressed their lack of trust towards each other.

²⁵ The CEC assured the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that any such decisions would be justified, implemented in a reasonable fashion and in the spirit of the law.

²⁶ The article in the previous Electoral Code provided that "Observers and representatives of mass media shall not be prosecuted for their opinions about the course of the elections or the summarization of their results."

In considering an observation activity, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM has taken into account the various findings outlined in this report and the views and concerns expressed by all interlocutors. These include issues related to the implementation of the new Electoral Code, potential issues in administering the elections, the compilation of voter lists, the role of the media and the rights of observers. Particularly noticeable was the distrust expressed by many interlocutors in the stated objective of the authorities to conduct a transparent and fair election process. On the other hand, preparations for the elections are well under way and the amended electoral code provides a good basis for the conduct of democratic elections, if implemented fully and properly. On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a standard Election Observation Mission for the forthcoming parliamentary elections, contingent upon the receipt of an official invitation from the Armenian authorities. The OSCE/ODIHR has been informed by the authorities that a timely invitation will be forthcoming once the election has been formally announced.

In light of the above, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of a core team of experts together with 24 long-term observers to be seconded by participating States, who will be deployed throughout Armenia. The NAM also recommends that 250 short-term observers be requested from participating States to ensure a wide and geographically balanced coverage of the country for the observation of voting, counting and tabulation of results.

ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS

AUTHORITIES

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ashot HOVAKIMIAN, Deputy Foreign Minister
Vahram KAZHOYAN, Head of International Organizations Department

Presidential Administration

Vigen SARGSYAN, Chief

Central Election Commission

Tigran MUKUCHYAN, Chairperson
Tatevik OHANYAN, Member

National Assembly

Davit HARUTYUNYAN, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs

Police Passport and Visa Department

Hovhannes KOCHARYAN, Head

Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia

Karen ANDREASYAN

POLITICAL PARTIES (in alphabetical order)

Armenian National Congress

Levon ZOURABIAN, Coordinator
Vladimir KARAPETIAN, External Relations
Avetis AVAKIAN, Executive Director of the Office of the First President of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosian

Armenian Revolutionary Federation - Dashnaktsutyun

Artush SHAHBAZYAN, Secretary of Parliamentary Faction, Deputy Chairperson of the State and Legal Affairs Committee of the National Assembly
Artsvik MINASYAN, Deputy Chairperson of Standing Committee on Financial-Credit and Budgetary of the National Assembly

Heritage Party

Stepan SAFARYAN, Head of Parliamentary Faction
Hovsep KHURSHUDYAN, Spokesperson
Armen MARTIROSYAN, MP
Karine HAKOBYAN, Secretary

Prosperous Armenia Party

Aram SAFARYAN, Secretary of the Parliamentary Faction
Vardan BOSTANJYAN, MP
Naira ZOHRABIAN, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on European Integration of the National Assembly

Republican Party of Armenia

Galust SAHAKYAN, Deputy Party Leader, Head of Parliamentary Faction, Member of the RPA Board

Rule of Law Party

Arthur BAGHDASARYAN, Leader of RLP
Heghine BISHARYAN, Head of Parliamentary Faction

MEDIA

Council of the Armenian Public Television and Radio Company

Alexan HARUTYUNYAN, Chairperson

Samvel FARMANYAN, Director of News and Analytical Reports of Public Television/Public Radio

National Council for Television and Radio

Grigor AMALYAN, Chairperson

CIVIL SOCIETY

Armenian Helsinki Committee

Avetik ISHKHANYAN, Chairperson

It's Your Choice

Harutyun HAMBARDZUMYAN, President

Transparency International Anti-corruption Center of Armenia

Sona AYVAZYAN, Chairperson of the Board

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

OSCE Office in Yerevan

Ambassador Andrey SOROKIN, Head of Office

European Union Delegation to Armenia

Ambassador Traian HRISTEA, Head of Delegation

Onno SIMONS, First Counsellor

Andrej DIDENKO, Political Advisor

Council of Europe Office in Armenia

Silvia ZEHE, Head of Office

Embassies

Charge d'Affaires Georgi KARASTAMATOV, Bulgaria

First Counsellor Isabelle GUISNEL, France

Ambassador Hans-Jochen SCHMIDT, Germany

Charge d'Affaires Vassiliki DICOPOULOU, Greece

Second Secretary Paolo BONISSONE, Italy

Ambassador Giedrius APOUKAS, Lithuania

Second Secretary Maciej FALKOWSKI, Poland

Ambassador Crina PRUNARIU, Romania

Minister-Counsellor Sergey OVERCHENKO, Russian Federation

Ambassador Katherine LEACH, United Kingdom

Political Officer Christopher ANDERSON, United States

Chief of the Political/Economic Section Barton PUTNEY, United States

Counterpart International

Alex SARDAR, Chief of Party Armenia

International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)

Michael GETTO, Chief of Party Armenia

National Democratic Institute (NDI)

Michael MURPHY, Director of Civic Programs