

**OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION SESSION OF THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE**  
**Warsaw, 30 September – 8 October 2010**

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**STATEMENT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**

**Tuesday, 5 October**

**Working session 6**

**Humanitarian Issues and Other Commitments including**

- Refugees and displaced persons**
- Treatment of citizens of other participating States**
- Human rights education**

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**Head of Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues Desk**  
**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Mr./Mme.Moderator,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Armenia has always taken all possible measures to ensure comprehensive and equal protection of the rights and freedoms of persons seeking asylum and recognized as refugees in the Republic of Armenia. In 2008, the new Law “On Refugees and Asylum” was adopted, which is in full compliance with the requirements of the 1951 Geneva Convention and its Protocol, and other international instruments.

Armenia has continuously pursued a policy of full integration of refugees, including those who are minors, into the society. Refugees granted asylum in the territory of the Republic of Armenia have the right to benefit from the social services envisaged for the Armenian citizens as prescribed by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, to receive state allowances and other monetary assistance, free medical aid and care guaranteed by the State, as well as the right to pension insurance specified by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, and the right to social protection in case of unemployment, provided that they meet the requirements of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia regulating the relevant field. In accordance with the Civil Code of the Republic of Armenia, everyone shall have the right to apply to courts for protection of his or her rights; this provision extends also to refugees and asylum seekers. The Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Refugees and Asylum” guarantees the right to judicial protection for rejected asylum seekers. In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On State Duty,” the decision on rejection may be appealed before the courts without payment of state duty.

Despite the immense efforts made for years with the purpose of resolving the problems of more than 400000 refugees exiled from Azerbaijan, Armenia has not yet fully resolved the housing problem of the refugees. According to preliminary estimates, about 40mln dollars would be required for solving the housing problem of refugee families still lacking permanent shelter.

In addition to this, the Government also deals with the problem of returning the persons internally displaced due to military operations as a result of Nagorno Karabakh conflict to their permanent places of residence. In 2008, the Assistance Program for Return of the Internally Displaced Persons Residing in Border Settlements of Armenia to Their Places of Origin was adopted: the implementation of the program will require approximately USD 38.5 million.

Rapid resolution of the housing problem for both refugees and internally displaced persons will be possible only with adequate and continuous assistance from the international community.

Briefly referring to the issue of treatment of foreigners in Armenia, I would like to note that the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Foreigners”, adopted in 2006, defines the types of residency status for foreigners, the grounds and time limits for granting residency status, the grounds for rejecting the residency status, the procedures for granting and rejecting work permits to foreigners, the procedures for leaving the territory of the Republic of Armenia by foreigners, and for their deportation, and other issues.

In the Republic of Armenia, foreigners are granted the same rights, freedoms and duties as the citizens of the Republic of Armenia, and shall bear the same responsibilities as the citizens of the Republic of Armenia in the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

In conclusion, I would like to touch upon human rights education, an issue paid utmost attention in the country as a prerequisite for the development of democratic, empowered and rights-aware society. Since 2001, Human Rights is included as a separate subject in the general education curriculum. Students study also “Civic Education” and “State and Law” subjects. Six human rights libraries have been set up as human rights education resource centers in different regions. Special trainings have been carried out for the teachers on teaching human rights. The initiative of the Constitutional Rights Protective Centre NGO involved in human rights education, and the founder of the Armenian Human Rights School, to establish human rights education training centre was welcomed. The teachers’ assessment of the impact of human rights education is very positive as having visible favorable changes in the behavior and attitudes of the students.

Armenia among others actively participated in the drafting of the second UN World Program for Human Rights Education. One of the recommendations presented was to devise more targeted approaches that would take into account the needs of the target groups, i.e. refugees, IDPs, the disabled, as well as the challenges that the given country faces in a particular period of time. This is an area that we have to pay more attention to, and the international community’s assistance to this end is indispensable. We stand ready to keep on working with the OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE office in Yerevan in the dissemination and embedding of human rights standards in Armenia.

Thank you.