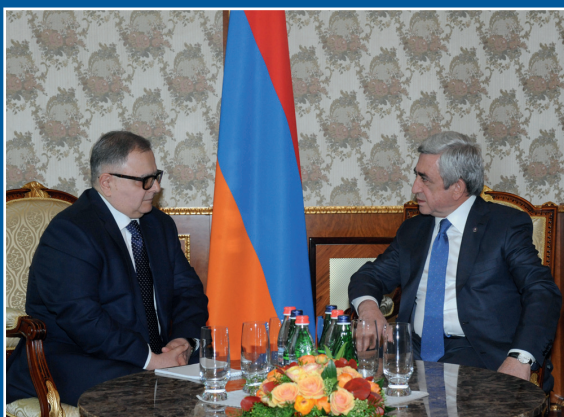


# NEWS LETTER

OSCE Office in Yerevan



## AMBASSADOR ARGO AVAKOV MEETS WITH THE PRESIDENT

On 14 April the newly appointed Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan Ambassador Argo Avakov met with the President Serzh Sargsyan. The President congratulated the Ambassador with the new appointment and expressed confidence that his years-long experience will help in fulfilling efficiently his mission in Armenia. Ambassador Avakov assured that during his tenure he would do his best to further develop and deepen the already existing high level co-operation.

The parties exchanged views on the process going on in the framework of the constitutional changes in Armenia and the Electoral Code changes. As well, they discussed other programs carried out by the OSCE in three different dimensions.



## OSCE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE VISIT TO THE OFFICE

On 29-30 June the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier visited the premises of the Office and met with civil society representatives, while in Armenia as part of his official visit to the three countries of the South Caucasus.

The Chairperson underlined his appreciation for the Office's activities in all three dimensions and commended its good co-operation with Armenian institutions.

Steinmeier was welcomed by Ambassador Argo Avakov, Head of the Office. "The Office in Yerevan is closely co-operating with state structures and civil society in Armenia and welcomes this visit by the Chairperson-in-Office," said Avakov. "Civil society plays an important role in enhancing public confidence in the electoral process, improving police-public partnership as well as promoting women and youth engagement and the freedom of the media in Armenia".

## REGULATORY REFORM ROADMAP



The finalization of a Regulatory Reform Roadmap for Armenia was the focus of a workshop co-organized by the OSCE ODIHR, the Ministry of Justice and the OSCE Office in Yerevan on 27 and 28 May in Tsaghkadzor, Armenia. Participants from the executive branch, the legislature, civil society and international organizations exchanged views on how to improve the overall process of lawmaking in the country. Topics discussed included policy-making and legislative planning, public consultations and regulatory impact assessment, as well as monitoring and evaluation of legislation. The workshop aimed to discuss recommendations for reform from previous thematic lawmaking workshops, conducted in Armenia in 2015, and from OSCE/ODIHR's 2014 report on the Comprehensive Assessment of the Legislative Procedure in Armenia.

## GREEN GROWTH MANAGEMENT

On 11 May the Office jointly with OECD organized a national workshop to present methodologies measuring efforts to promote a greener national economy. The workshop gathered 30 representatives from the Ministries of Economy and Nature Protection, National Statistical Service, academia, civil society and local and international experts. Experts from Slovakia and Ukraine introduced their countries' experience in using green growth indicators to measure the sustainable development. The event marked the kick-off of the OSCE-led project activity aimed at assessing Armenia's economic performance based on the green growth indicators, with involvement of international and national experts.

## CYBER SECURITY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK



On 23 March the Office jointly with the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Defence, National Security and Internal Affairs and the British Embassy in Yerevan organized an international gathering to look at developments in the cyber security sector and related regulatory frameworks. Some 60 participants from the government structures, parliament, the private sector and international and local experts in the field exchanged thoughts regarding best practices.

## POLICE SCHOOL INSPECTORS

Since the establishment of the school police inspectors' positions in 2014, the Office was heavily engaged in their capacity building, equipping them with new knowledge and skills to create robust relationships with students, parents, teachers and other partners. On 26 February the Office together with the Police and the Ministry of Science and Education organized a roundtable to discuss the role of school inspectors, practical aspects of their work as well as problems and challenges. The roundtable brought together around 60 school inspectors, heads of police units, school headmasters and other stakeholders.



## UNIVERSAL RIGHTS AWARD



The OSCE, US Embassy, EU Delegation, British Embassy, Council of Europe and UN honoured individuals working to promote various aspects of human rights in Armenia at the Universal Rights Awards Ceremony on 23 June in Yerevan. Ambassador Argo Avakov, Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, presented “Woman of Courage” Award to Jemma Hasratyan, President of the Association of Women with University Education in recognition of her efforts to promote equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Armenia. Other awardees included the Citizen Observers Initiative (Freedom Defender), Photolure agency (Media Excellence), Vache Terteryan, First Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Development (Government Reformer), Zaruhi Batoyan (Promoting Inclusion) and Narine Hovakimyan, a judge from Lori District Court (Promoting Justice for All).

## EMPOWERING WOMEN

The Office launched capacity building projects with newly established Women Resource Centres (WRC) in Ijevan, Sisian and Yeghegnadzor. The projects aim to promote the role of women in political, public and economic spheres through strengthening institutional capacities and leadership skills of WRC board and staff members and enhance young women’s knowledge and skills to participate in local decision-making processes.

## MIGRANT RIGHTS

From 24 to 26 March the Office, in co-operation with ODIHR, organized a training course on the rights of migrants, at the request of the State Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development. The course was designed to support national authorities to ensure that migration management practices comply with relevant international legal obligations and OSCE commitments that protect the human rights of migrants. Over 25 representatives participated from respective Ministries, Chamber of Advocates, as well as civil society and lawyers dealing with migration issues.







## JUDICIAL REFORM

Human rights and fair trial standards, as reflected in recent decisions of the Armenian Cassation Court, were the focus of an OSCE-supported training workshop held on June 11 and 12 in Dilijan. It aimed at promoting transparency and predictability of justice and a unified application of the law. Some forty judges of courts of general jurisdiction and the Court of Appeals and their assistants discussed the major precedent decisions of the Cassation Court related to human rights and the judicial supervision of pre-trial proceedings, presumption of innocence, right to liberty and security of person and other fair trial guarantees. It was the fourth event in a series since November 2015 organized with the OSCE support providing training to up to 100 criminal law judges and their assistants from the capital and Armenian regions.

Armenian judges headed by the Chairman of the Cassation Court participated in the annual meeting

of the European Association of Judges that took place on 21-23 May in Jerusalem, Israel. It aimed to cultivate connections as to improve independence of the judiciary, quality of justice and rule of law in the member associations, including Armenia.

On 3 February the Office co-organized a workshop on the consequences of miscarriages of justice and new tools for their correction. The event raised awareness of legal professionals about innovations in the areas of fair trial proceedings and expanded judicial guarantees to help wrongfully convicted persons to recover justice.

## E-DATABASE FOR PUBLIC DEFENDERS

The Office together with ABA/CEELI supported development of centralized e- database that link the Public Defender's Offices in regions with the central office in Yerevan within the Chamber of Advocates.

### About the OSCE

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) works for stability, prosperity and democracy in its 57 participating states through political dialogue on shared values and through practical work that makes a lasting difference.

The OSCE Office in Yerevan was established in 2000 to assist Armenia in the implementation of its OSCE commitments in all three aspects of security: politico-military, economic and environmental, and the human dimension.

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