

"Promotion and Protection of
Human Rights in Armenia" project

In partnership with the Coordination Council Secretariat,
Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia

**Assessment and Recommendations Report:
*Improving the Monitoring and Reporting System
for the Human Rights Action Plan***

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CSOs – civil society organizations

HRBA – Human rights-based approach

NGOs – non-governmental organizations

NAP – National Action Plan

HRAP – National Human Rights Action Plan

HRPS – National Human Rights Protection Strategy

M&E – monitoring and evaluation

MoJ – Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia

OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

PSDA – Public Service Development Agency, Ministry of Justice, Republic of Georgia

SDGs – United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

TOR – terms of reference

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UPR – Universal Periodic Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This assessment and recommendations report is the product of a UNDP consultancy, in the framework of European Union funded Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Armenia project, aimed at strengthening the Armenian Human Rights Action Plan (HRAP) and its supporting processes. Following the introductory chapter covering the consultancy, chapters II and III provide an analysis of the form and content of the current HRAP, in the context of the preceding HRAP (2014-2016) and the 2012 Human Rights Protection Strategy (HRPS) to which it is linked. The analysis, based on international practice and principles for effective drafting, monitoring, reporting and evaluation, identifies a number of key shortcomings in the organization and presentation of the current and past action plans. Numerous recommendations are made with regard to revising the current plan and are summarized in Table 7, located on page 22 of the report. A new structure of the current HRAP, which would more clearly organize the activities in accordance with international practice, is contained in annex 4. The proposed structure would also facilitate reporting and the drafting of reports. Another key shortcoming of the present HRAP concerns the HRPS, which is not only outdated, but does not clearly provide the necessary problem analysis nor does it identify the goals and objectives to which the HRAP should be linked. In the absence of these fundamental elements, it is difficult to assess whether the aims of the HRPS have been achieved.

The following chapter (IV), provides step-by-step recommendations on developing a new Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan. A template is provided for drafting the strategy (Table 8, page 24), and the structure and logframes (annex 3) are suggested for the new HRAP. Stakeholder consultations will be key in developing the strategy and its action plan and are emphasized throughout the report.

The next chapter (V) focuses on reports and reporting. A key metric, the "Status" of an activity (i.e., whether the implementation has been completed, is partially complete or has not been started), is recommended as essential for monitoring and reporting. New templates for reporting and report structures are suggested for quarterly reports (Table 9) and semi-annual or mid-year reports (Table 10). The need for a public annual report is emphasized and a structure for the report is proposed (Table 11). An effective online platform for reporting on the HRAP is also proposed, based on software that is already available free of charge for Microsoft Office users. The features of the system are shown in Table 12 on page 34. Experience has shown that such a platform can be a highly effective and efficient tool for reporting officers and the Secretariat.

The need to strengthen existing structures and processes supporting the HRAP is the focus of the following chapter (VI). A key recommendation in this chapter is to establish a high-level Human Rights Council that could more effectively coordinate and direct implementation of the HRAP, while taking into account the implementation of other human rights-related strategies and action plans. A proposed membership and mandate of a new high-level Human Rights Council is presented in Table 13 and the rationale for its creation is explained. The functions of the current Secretariat are reviewed and recommendations are made to strengthen the Secretariat and build the capacity of the reporting officers.

Another main focus of this chapter is on promoting and facilitating greater engagement by civil society in the HRAP, thereby enhancing its visibility. Recommendations are made to provide for CSO observers in the Coordinating Council and for using communications more effectively to inform and engage stakeholders. Special attention is given to engaging Parliament more effectively as well as regional and local officials.

The main recommendations made in the report are contained in annex 1 and are organized by those requiring follow-up this year (2018) or those that may be addressed next year (2019). As described in the Introduction, this report will be followed up by a validation workshop for stakeholders as well as by training on properly applying M&E principles for results-based policy planning. The validation workshop will also present the results of the online stakeholder survey on the HRAP (para. 4.b.).

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This consultancy is undertaken within the framework of the EU funded project on "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Armenia", implemented by UNDP in partnership with UNFPA and UNICEF. The main objective of the project is to support the Government of Armenia in advancing its human rights agenda and meeting its commitments under European and United Nations human rights instruments. The project focuses on a number of priority areas under the framework of the National Human Rights Protection Strategy (HRPS), adopted by the Government of Armenia in 2012, including the two national human rights action plans (HRAPs) adopted in 2014 and 2017 to implement the HRPS.
2. The project supports the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in developing and applying effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the HRAP based on international experience and best practices. The Project also aims at strengthening the capacity of the Coordinating Council, including reporting and coordination with the responsible agencies, and encouraging the broader participation of civil society in the HRAP process.
3. Within that framework, the expected results of this consultancy include¹:
 - a. An assessment, with recommendations, of the results-based framework and design of the current HRAP (2017-2019), taking into account international best practices and lessons learned from the previous HRAP (2014-2016) and other related policy documents with a view to improving the monitoring and reporting system for the HRPS and the HRAP;
 - b. Monitoring and reporting guidelines on the HRAP for the Coordinating Council and its participating Government agencies;
 - c. A package of recommendations for the more inclusive representation and engagement of civil society in the HRAP drafting and monitoring processes as well as for the implementation of international human rights recommendations;
 - d. Training for designated staff of the Coordinating Council and other Government agencies, as well as of respective National Assembly Committees on international human rights standards, the corresponding SDG framework, and possible synergies under the HRAP framework for efficient human rights reporting;
 - e. Training for the Coordinating Council on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) principles, practices, and tools, including gender sensitization and the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), for more effective and regular monitoring and reporting on HRAP implementation;
 - f. A seminar/workshop with civil society representatives on their role and more efficient engagement techniques in the HRAP drafting, monitoring, reporting processes.
4. To that end, the consultancy is designed to take place over four main stages:
 - a. The first stage consisted of a desk review of Armenia's two HRAPs and the HRPS on which it is based, taking into account related national action plans (NAPs) adopted by the Government of Armenia as well as relevant government guidelines on drafting, monitoring, reporting, and evaluating intersectoral policy documents. Additional research materials relating to the HRAPs, including relevant Government and non-governmental organization (NGO) reports, were also collected and analyzed in light of international experience and an initial Assessment Report – corresponding to the first part of the present report -- was drafted in April 2018 and circulated for comment to UNDP and the HRAP Secretariat for their review and further input.

¹ Summary of the Terms of reference, UNDP consultancy for "International Expert on Human Rights Monitoring and Evaluation".

- b. During the second stage, the consultant undertook his first mission to Armenia from 17 to 29 June 2018 to meet with a broad range of HRAP stakeholders, including from UNDP, the Ministry of Justice, Government agencies responsible for implementing the HRAP, civil society partners and interested NGOs, and international donors supporting the Government of Armenia in upholding its international human rights obligations. The mission focused, in particular, on the drafting, monitoring, reporting, and evaluating processes supporting the HRAP and its implementation. Following the mission, the Assessment Report was updated and expanded to include a broad range of recommendations aimed at improving the current HRAP as well as the development, drafting, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of a future Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan. Special emphasis was placed on building and enhancing partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) to promote their active engagement, while respecting their independence. The report also contains guidelines, templates and recommendations for drafting, monitoring, and reporting on the HRAP for use by the Coordinating Council and its participating ministries and agencies. This revised and expanded Assessment Report will be circulated for review and comment to UNDP, the HRAP Secretariat, and HRAP stakeholders. Additionally, an **online survey on the HRAP**, developed under this consultancy, has been shared with HRAP stakeholders in Government, civil society, and the Donor Community in Armenia. The views and suggestions collected in the survey will be used to further inform and help guide Government in its efforts to improve the HRAP and its supporting processes and mechanisms. A separate report on the results of the survey by the consultant will be shared by UNDP with Government and HRAP stakeholders.
 - c. During the third stage, the consultant will undertake a second mission to Armenia for the purpose of conducting a series of validation and training workshops aimed at enhancing and finalizing the Assessment Report and its recommendations for drafting, monitoring, and reporting on the HRAP. The workshops will include international monitoring and evaluation (M&E) principles and best practices applicable to the HRAP and the agenda will conform to the requirements of the terms of reference. A National Expert, recruited by UNDP under a related consultancy, will assist and participate in the workshops. All training materials developed and used in the workshops by the International Consultant will be turned over to UNDP and the MoJ for possible use in future trainings.
 - d. For the fourth and final stage of the consultancy, the Assessment and Recommendations Report, along with its guidelines and templates for drafting, monitoring, reporting, and evaluating the HRAP, will be finalized and submitted to UNDP and the MoJ for circulation to HRAP stakeholders and their possible translation into Armenian. The consultant will also submit a final Activity Report to UNDP at the conclusion of the consultancy.
5. It is hoped that this Assessment and Recommendations Report will contribute to providing a solid foundation for improving the development, drafting, monitoring, and reporting on the Armenian Human Rights Action Plan and enhancing the effective engagement of national and regional CSOs in the HRAP process.

II. OVERVIEW

6. Armenia is one of over 60 countries² that have adopted a national human rights action plan since Australia developed the first one in 1993. The Armenian HRAP is one of over 30 plans that are currently being implemented in all regions globally. Other countries in the region which have relatively recently adopted HRAPs include Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Georgia, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine. International experience and practice on HRAPs has evolved considerably over the last ten years, during which the majority of new HRAPs have been adopted. For some countries, the adoption of an HRAP proved to be only a one-time experiment, with no successor plan adopted after the first one had lapsed. More countries, however, have adopted more than one plan and a few countries³ have adopted a series of four or five plans, together spanning as much as 20 years. An increasing number of countries, including Armenia, have developed national action plans as definitive policy documents covering a wide range of Government initiatives from health and education to environment, energy efficiency, and social inclusion. The publication of these national action plans has helped to better inform citizens of public policy, stimulate constructive engagement by civil society, and hold Government more accountable for its stated commitments. A national human rights action plan additionally serves to inform international partners of a Government's commitment to meeting its international human rights obligations.

7. Not surprisingly, certain methodologies have been developed and best practices can be identified from this growing body of international experience. In general, key elements of successfully implemented HRAPs include: a focus on strategic priority goals and objectives; an effective development and drafting process; the application of sound M&E principles and practices; high-level commitment within Government; a well-trained and effectively functioning network human rights focal points /reporting officers within the responsible agencies; regular meetings of, and effective reporting by, the coordination mechanism and its working groups; a trained Secretariat with sufficient capacity to support the coordination mechanism; effective engagement of civil society partners; a concise and analytical annual public report; engagement with Parliament; linkages of the action plan to international obligations and reporting; and mobilization and engagement of local and regional Government entities. This report aims at assessing the Armenia HRAP in the light of this international experience and providing recommendations to improve its effectiveness, both as a policy document and as a process.

The Armenian HRAP in national context

8. The current Armenian HRAP can only be understood within the context of the National Human Rights Protection Strategy (HRPS), adopted in 2012, and the first Armenian HRAP covering the years 2014-2016. The intended purpose and priorities of the HRAP are contained only in the 2012 HRPS and it is this document which, in principle, must be examined to understand the HRAP. Unfortunately, it appears that the HRPS has not been officially translated into English. **Given the importance of the HRPS as the foundation document for the HRAP, and the support for the HRAP provided by the international community, it is recommended that there should be an official English version of the next HRPS for wider international circulation.**

9. The stated purpose of the HRPS and its action plans is to have a single, unified document, ensuring "the implementation of a common and comprehensive policy in the sphere of human rights protection". That document should also "provide targeted solutions" and "ensure policy continuity".⁴ By listing

² The author, in collaboration with other researchers, has identified 104 HRAPs adopted by 64 countries and has collected 95 of the plans.

³ Mexico (5 plans), Nepal (4 plans) and Peru (4 plans).

⁴ HRPS, paras. 14,14(1) and 14(2).

numerous other national action plans (NAPs) that are related to human rights⁵, the HRPS implies, quite rightly, that these plans need to be taken into account by the HRPS and its action plans. The dilemma for many HRAPs, including Armenia's, is how to take human rights-related NAPs into account. Those plans often address specific human rights issues and they go into great detail in doing so. There is certainly no point in trying to collect and repeat all of the human rights-related provisions from all human rights-related NAPs into the HRAP. The burden of reporting and duplication would be too great and the resulting document would be so lengthy as to be practically inaccessible to most stakeholders. At the same time, linkages to other related policy documents need to be made explicit, as suggested further in this report under "Linkages to other human rights-related strategies and action plans".⁶

10. If a HRAP cannot be the compilation in a single document of all Government initiatives in the field of human rights, then what is it? This is the question that must be answered so that there can be a common vision among the many Government ministries and agencies responsible for implementing activities and reporting on them. Sometimes it has been suggested that HRAPs should only focus on international human rights commitments, namely the recommendations of authoritative human rights mechanisms, including those of the United Nations, the European Union, and the Council of Europe. It has also been suggested that, as a multisectoral action plan, an HRAP should only include initiatives involving more than one agency in their implementation. International experience suggests that both of those approaches are too narrow and would not present a sufficiently inclusive picture of the scope of Government's actions in the field of human rights. Instead, **HRAPs should be limited to focusing on strategic actions across all ministries that address priority human rights concerns, citing linkages to other related plans for further information, as appropriate.** Experience has shown that a certain amount of duplication between HRAPs and related NAPs is unavoidable. Making the linkages explicit in the HRAP can assist reporting officers and HRAP stakeholders seeking further detail on specific issues. Similarly, **actions that respond to the recommendations of authoritative human rights bodies – including not only the international mechanisms but National Human Rights Institutions as well, like the Armenian Human Rights Defender – should be included in the HRAP and referenced to assist reporting or follow-up to those bodies. What should be avoided in a HRAP is the listing of the regular, day-to-day activities that are routinely carried out by Government ministries under their mandate and which are not a main factor in the analysis of the problem being addressed. A disciplined approach to drafting the HRAP can significantly lessen the reporting burden on the implementing agencies and facilitate more effective analysis and support by the stakeholders as well.**

Length of the HRAP

11. Some stakeholders have questioned the length of the current HRAP, expressing the view that it was perhaps overly ambitious. However, a comparison of Armenia's current HRAP with HRAPs that have been relatively recently adopted in other countries suggests that this is not the case. As shown in Table 1, Armenia ranks below the average in terms of the length of the action plan logframes and in terms of the total number of activities to be implemented divided by the number of years in the duration of the action plan, which gives a measure of "activities per year". One reason for this is that many of the key areas normally contained in a HRAP have been addressed in other action plans, most notably those dealing with children's rights, gender equality, judicial reform, and persons with disabilities. Experience has shown that including too many activities in a HRAP may undermine a focus on priority issues and strategic actions, resulting in an annual report that is too lengthy for stakeholders and decision-makers to adequately digest. The longer the plan and the more activities that are being reported on, the more

⁵ HRPS, para. 14(1).

⁶ See paras. 39-40 and 93-94.

concise and analytical the reporting must be. This has been a major challenge for some of the countries adopting very long HRAPs. Reporting in Armenia has been a challenge more in terms of the methods used to gather information from the reporting officers than as a result of too many activities. Streamlining the process of monitoring and reporting, as suggested in chapter V below, should ease the present reporting burden on the Secretariat, improve the quality of reports, and allow for a modest increase in the number of activities proposed – particularly by Ministries other than the Ministry of Justice, which already accounts for a disproportionate share of activities to be implemented in the HRAP.

Comparison of recently adopted National Human Rights Action Plans⁷				
Country	Duration in Years	Pages of Logframes	Total Activities	Activities per year
Turkmenistan	5	22	82	16
Armenia	3	36	96	32
Moldova	4	80	282	70
Tanzania	5	87	375	75
Sri Lanka	6	83	531	89
Malawi	5	62	445	89
Australia	3 ⁸	78	356	119
Nepal	5	99	798	160
Georgia	2	127	500	250

Table 1.

Distribution of implementation responsibility

12. HRAPs typically involve all Government Ministries in implementing activities, as human rights is a cross-cutting issue and virtually all Government entities can be seen as bearing some measure of "duty" to serve and empower the "rights-bearing" public. That idea of widely-shared responsibility for human rights is reflected in the composition of the Coordinating Council that is charged with monitoring and reporting on the HRAP. As shown in Table 2, the Coordinating Council counts 19 Ministries and Government Agencies among its members, not counting the Staff of Government which had been tasked with chairing the Council. However, as also shown in Table 2, the commitments to the HRAP -- as represented by the number of activities for each Responsible Agency identified in the plan -- are not proportionally shared among the Council members. The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs account for over 50% of all the activities listed in the HRAP. While it is expected that these two key Ministries would have a significant number of activities -- especially as the MoJ is also responsible for the prison system -- it is reasonable to expect a more equitable distribution of responsibilities. Ministries and agencies that usually account for more activities in a HRAP include: Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education and Science; the Police; the Prosecutor General; the Investigative Committee; Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development; Ministry of Economic Development and Investment; and two Ministries that are not even included among the Council membership, namely the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Energy, Infrastructure and Natural Resources.

⁷ Turkmenistan, 2016-2020; Australia, 2012; Armenia, 2014-2016; Moldova, 2011-2014; Tanzania, 2013-2017; Sri Lanka, 2011-2016; Malawi, 2016-2020 (adoption pending); Nepal, 2014-2019; and Georgia, 2016-2017.

⁸ The Australian Plan does not specify an end date but reporting on progress was foreseen to take place three years after its launch.

Table 2.

2017-2019 HRAP IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY		
	HRAP Coordinating Council Member	No. Activities Implementing
1.	Ministry of Justice	25
2.	Human Rights Defender	*/
3.	Ministry of Health	10
4.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs	25
5.	Ministry of Nature Protection	3
6.	Ministry of Education and Science	12
7.	Ministry of Defense	8
8.	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development	0
9.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	3
10.	Ministry of Emergency Situations	1
11.	Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs	1
12.	Ministry of Finance	*/
13.	Ministry of Economic Development and Investment	0
14.	Ministry of Diaspora	0
15.	Ministry of Culture	0
16.	Deputy Chief of Police under the Government	1
17.	Deputy Prosecutor General	0
18.	Deputy Head of the Investigative Committee	0
19.	Deputy Mayor of Yerevan	0
	TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES **/	89
<i>Note: the following Ministries are not represented on the Coordinating Council: Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Transport, Communication and Information Technologies; Ministry of Energy, Infrastructure and Natural Resources; and Ministry of International Economic Integration and Reforms.</i>		

**/As a National Human Rights Institution, the Human Rights Defender fulfills an advisory rather than an implementing role. The Ministry of Finance also fulfills an advisory role, with respect to budgetary issues.*

***/ The following non-member State entities are responsible for implementing an additional seven activities listed in the Plan: Academy of Justice (3); Central Electoral Commission (1); State Urban Development Committee (2); and the National Commission on Television and Radio (1).*

13. It is recommended that the future National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan should contain a more equitable distribution of implementing responsibilities among Government Ministries, including those entities responsible for law enforcement and fair trials. Care should be taken to identify priority issue areas and strategic activities for human rights, relying, where possible, on relevant recommendations from international human rights bodies as well as those of the Human Rights Defender.

III. IMPROVING THE HRAP

Structure of the HRAP

14. There is a relatively broad variation among the structure of HRAPs Internationally. Some plans are all narrative, a few are only logframes, and most are a combination of the two. Narrative affords the opportunity to present explanations on background, problem analysis, and mechanisms for monitoring

implementation. Logframes afford a concise way to clearly present intended activities along with indicators to measure their implementation and impact.

15. The current Armenian HRAP covering 2017-2019 consists mostly of logframes, giving no information on the goals or objectives of the plan, how it was drafted, or how it relates to previous plans. Some of this information is contained in the 2012 HRPS. As shown in annex 2, there are a number of issue areas listed in the HRPS that have not been reflected in one or either of the two implementing action plans. Additionally, some new issue areas not mentioned in the HRPS appear in the HRAPs. As no evaluation of the HRPS or the action plans has been carried out, it is not readily apparent how the HRPS still applies (if at all), what parts of it have been successfully implemented by the 2014-2016 HRAP, and what remaining gaps or new challenges the present HRAP aims to address. Among the countries that adopt a national human rights strategy as a foundation document for their HRAPs, there is generally a specified duration of the strategy, so that it covers a maximum of two or three action plans and does not extend more than several years in duration before being updated and replaced by a new strategy. The Armenian HRPS, however, appears to be open-ended. Although some HRAPs are similarly open-ended, there are none that are still actively implemented or reported on after the passing of several years.⁹

16. Given the inevitable changes in the priorities of human rights issues and the capacity of Governments to address them, it is recommended that future National Human Rights Protection Strategies should cover a maximum of four to six years, accounting for only two cycles of implementing action plans. The present HRPS should be replaced by a new National Human Rights Strategy¹⁰ that represents the vision of the new Government and the expectations of the Armenian people, following the recent historic "Velvet Revolution". The new Strategy should be developed in a consultative and transparent prioritization process with civil society and adopted in 2019 following elections. The basic elements in a Human Rights Strategy document and a description of the development process is contained in chapter IV below. A new Action Plan can then be developed, based on the new Strategy, and adopted to succeed the present HRAP, which expires at the end of 2019. An independent evaluation and lessons-learned of the Strategy and its two action plans should be carried out in early 2019 and completed before the new strategy and action plan are developed, drafted and adopted.

17. Specific recommendations on revising the current HRAP are summarized in Table 7 below. It is also recommended that the next HRAP should be expanded to include a brief introduction to the plan, in line with international practice that includes: the purpose of the plan; a brief overview with the HRPS and its priorities and objectives; the relationship to the previous HRAP and to other current human rights-related action plans; reference to international obligations and recommendations from international human rights bodies; an overview of the drafting, monitoring and reporting processes; and an overview of the mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the HRAP, namely the Coordinating Council, its thematic working groups, and its Secretariat. This introduction could serve as a "boilerplate" that could be updated periodically and adapted for use in HRAP information sheets, subsequent action plans, and an annual report. Most importantly, the proposed introduction would provide a proper context for understanding and analyzing the HRAP. The HRAP should also contain a

⁹ Examples include: Bolivia (1999); Cape Verde (2003); Ecuador (1998); Latvia (1995); Maldives (2008); Mauritania (2003); Nigeria (2006); South Africa (1998); and Spain (2008),

¹⁰ It is recommended that either the word "protection" should be dropped from the title of the Strategy or that the title be amended to read "National Human Rights Promotion and Protection Strategy", which more accurately reflects the dual nature of human rights initiatives.

table of contents, the absence of which makes it difficult to understand how any NAP is organized, what is included in the plan, and how to readily access issues of particular interest.¹¹

Formatting

18. Formatting is not an issue with the current HRAP, which has no narrative to be formatted, but it is an issue affecting the HRPS and a number of other Armenian strategies and action plans. Those documents tend to be difficult to follow at times because of the numbering system employed and the lack of indentation to denote lists or sub-paragraphs.¹² **Consideration should be given to highlighting section headings with underlining, using letters or roman numerals to denote sections or sub-paragraphs and /or using indentation to distinguish sub-paragraphs from the numbered paragraphs. Such relatively small formatting changes may improve "readability" and facilitate a better understanding of the policy documents, including by the general public.**

HRAP issue headings

19. A key omission in the present HRAP 2017-2019 is the absence of issue headings in the tables, i.e. the "Right to health" or "Right to fair trial", etc. These headings are necessary for an understanding and analysis of what is covered in the plan and what may have been left out. The HRPS sets out a list of priorities (para. 20) and vulnerable groups (para. 23) to be addressed in subsequent action plans, so it is only reasonable to check whether or how those issues are covered in the plan. Different issues have different "constituencies" among the HRAP's stakeholders, who normally are drawn to those parts of the plan that concern them the most. Presently, the only way to do so is to go through the entire listing of 96 actions, which covers 36 pages of tables.

20. Problems concerning human rights issue headings extend beyond the present HRAP. An analysis carried out by the consultant of the HRPS and both HRAPs revealed an inconsistent and sometimes misleading use of issue headings in the Strategy and its first HRAP. For example, the first HRAP combined the "Right to life" with the "Right to healthcare" despite that the "Right to life" normally involves issues of deprivation of life by the State, such as the death penalty, summary executions, improper use of force by security forces, etc. The "Right to health" (not healthcare) involves another set of human rights issues that have been well developed in international human rights law and practice. The "Right to life" could be more reasonably combined with the "Right to liberty and security of the person", which is also listed in the HRPS as a priority issue.

21. As shown in Table 3, the wording of the human rights headings in the first HRAP (2014-2016) was unintentionally misleading or inappropriate, making access, understanding, and analysis difficult. A mapping of the actions listed in the second HRAP (2017-2019) and the headings that should have been used is discussed in the following section.

22. International experience has shown that human rights issue areas are the main organizing principle for an HRAP. The wording of those rights should accord with internationally-recognized human rights in order to correctly identify the content and international jurisprudence applicable to those rights. Related rights should be clustered together and may be combined, as appropriate. In the future, assistance in identifying or confirming appropriate headings may be provided by the OHCHR Regional Office in Tbilisi, Georgia.

¹¹ See, for example, the current strategies on Equal Rights and Opportunities for Man and Women (2018-2022) and on Protecting the Rights of the Child (2017-2021), both of which are lacking a table of contents. In contrast, the 2018-2023 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reform is clearly organized and accessible, thanks to its table of contents.

¹² The recent 2018-2023 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reform is a good example of how formatting can be effectively used to enhance readability and understanding.

Table 3: Rights headings appearing in the first HRAP (2014-2016)		
HRAP 2014-2016 RIGHTS HEADINGS ¹³		COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS
1	Right to healthcare and life	Should be "Right to health"; "Right to life" should be moved to "Right to liberty and security of the person"
2	Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and fight against discrimination	"Fight against discrimination" should be included under a new heading "Non-discrimination and the protection of national, ethnic, and linguistic minorities"
3	Right to education	This should not include HR training for police, judges, lawyers (action 14)
4	Right to social security, sufficient quality of life, and employment	Should be "Right to social security and an adequate standard of living". "Labor rights" should be a separate heading
5	Right to respect for privacy and family life	Right to privacy
6	Right to free and fair elections	Should be "Right to participate in public affairs", a broader heading for rights protected under ICCPR art 25
7	Right to freedom of expression, assembly, and association	Should be "Freedom of expression and access to information"; "Freedoms of association and assembly" should be a separate heading
8	Right to freedom from torture, and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment	Should be combined with "Right to liberty and security of the person"; Violence against women (actions 39-42) should be moved to "Women's rights and gender equality" (missing from the HRAP)
9	Rights of the child	Same
10	Rights of older persons	Same
11	Rights of persons with disabilities	Same
HRAP 2014-2016 RIGHTS HEADINGS		COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS
12	Right to national and ethnic identity	Should be "Protection of national, ethnic, and linguistic minorities"
13	Rights of refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless persons	"IDPs" and "Migrants" should be included
14	Right to environmental protection	Same
15	Economic rights, right to property	Should be "Right to property" as the content of "Economic rights" is unclear
16	Right to a fair trial	Right to fair trial
17	Rights of military servicemen and conscripts	These actions could be listed under the sub-heading "Human rights and the military" under the heading "Right to liberty and security of the person"
18	Right of person to freedom and immunity	Should be "Right to liberty and security of the person"
19	Improvement of mechanisms for protection of human rights	Same

Organization

23. As is apparent in Table 3, the issue areas identified in the first HRAP (2014-2016) are not clustered nor are they listed in a logical order. The rights listed in an HRAP are generally clustered and listed in an order corresponding to the two general classes of human rights (i.e., Civil and political rights; and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), followed by key vulnerable groups (i.e. Women rights /gender equality; Rights of the child; Protection of minorities; Rights of disabled persons, etc.). Support for human rights mechanisms, upholding international human rights obligations (e.g., submitting overdue treaty body reports, inviting Special rapporteurs, Business and human rights, etc.) may come at the end. It should be noted that the structure of the HRAP determines, in large part, the structure of the

¹³ The headings are listed in the order they appear in the HRAP.

annual report of the plan. A clearly and appropriately organized plan, therefore, will provide the necessary foundation for a clear and appropriately organized report.

24. Taking into account international experience and practice, a suggested ordering of the rights covered in the HRPS and its action plans is contained in Table 4.

25. It is recommended that the current HRAP (2017-2019) should be revised to include human rights headings and the actions should be reorganized to conform to the sequence and clustering of rights as suggested in Table 4. The HRAP should contain a table of contents for easy reference. Consideration should be given to adding a brief introduction to the revised HRAP, as suggested above. A revised HRAP that has been reorganized along the suggested lines is contained in annex 4.

Table 4: Suggested HRAP organization by human rights issue heading

SUGGESTED HEADINGS	CURRENT HEADINGS¹⁴
CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS	Missing
Rights to life, liberty, and security of the person a. Freedom from torture b. Human rights of detainees c. Human rights and the military	Right to life; Right to liberty and security; Combatting torture; Rights of military servicemen and conscripts; Freedom of liberty and immunity
Right to fair trial	Same
Freedoms of association and assembly	Freedom of peaceful assembly; freedom of association listed separately
Freedom of expression and access to information	Freedom of expression of free will; combined with freedom of assembly
Right to participate in public affairs	Right to free and fair elections, Right to electoral law
Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion	Same
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS	Missing
Right to health	Right to healthcare, right to health protection; combined with Right to life
Right to education	Same
Right to social security and an adequate standard of living	Social security guarantees; separate from Right to an adequate standard of living
Labor rights	Right to employment (combined with social security and adequate standard of living)
Right to property	Economic rights, Right to ownership
Cultural rights	Right to culture
Right to environmental protection	Same
RIGHTS OF VULNERABLE GROUPS	Missing
Women's rights, gender equality, and violence against women (sub-headings may be added as appropriate)	Listed as a vulnerable group in the Strategy but not listed in the HRAP; Violence Against Women, trafficking should be included here
Rights of the child (sub-headings may be added as appropriate)	Same
Rights of persons with disabilities	Same
Rights of older persons	Rights of the elderly

¹⁴ The headings are taken from the HRPS and the first HRAP (2014-2016). It should be noted that the headings taken from the Strategy were obtained through Google translate and may diverge from the original Armenian.

Non-discrimination and protection of national, ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities	Non-discrimination and the protection of minorities
Rights of IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants	IDPs and migrants not mentioned in headings
OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS-RELATED ISSUES	Missing
Improving human rights protection mechanisms	Same
Ratification and reporting under HR treaties	Missing
Business and human rights	Missing

Mapping issue coverage

26. One of the most fundamental questions that may be asked of any HRAP is, "What issues does the plan cover?" To identify the issues covered in the second HRAP (2017-2019), a stakeholder or researcher must examine each of the 96 actions contained in the plan, categorize them by the human right concerned or the beneficiary vulnerable group, then cluster those together and count them. Since different researchers may be using different criteria to categorize the actions, it is highly probable that answers will vary significantly as to which action entails which human right or which vulnerable group. Clearly, the absence of organization in the second HRAP impedes basic analysis and accountability in its present unstructured form.

27. While the first HRAP (2014-2016) was divided into human rights issue areas, it was nonetheless problematic as well. As noted above, a number of the rights were either not identified correctly or clustered inappropriately with unrelated rights.¹⁵ Some of the rights did not correspond to the rights listed as either "priorities" or "strategic objectives" in the 2012 HRPS. The Strategy, which is still operative as the foundation for the present HRAP, is itself sometimes unclear and confusing, given that there are three distinct lists covering human rights issue areas, namely those listed under "priorities" (para. 20), those listed under "vulnerable groups" (para. 23), and those listed under "strategy directions" (section IV).

28. Taking into account those challenges, the author carried out a mapping of human rights issue areas covered in the two HRAPs, compared to the issue areas identified in the HRPS. A table showing the results of the mapping is contained in annex 2, wherein the number of actions is counted in each HRAP addressing the specific issue areas identified in the Strategy. The mapping provides an overview into the issues emphasized or omitted in each of the two HRAPs.

29. The main findings of the mapping include the following:

- a. The Right to a fair trial, listed as a "priority" in the HRPS but missing from "strategic directions", was not addressed in the second HRAP (2017-2019);
- b. Women's rights were not listed as an issue area in the first HRAP (2014-2016) despite that there were several actions addressing this issue;
- c. Two vulnerable groups listed in the HRPS ("families of perished freedom fighters" and "repressed persons") do not appear to be addressed in either HRAP;
- d. Five issue areas not listed in the HRPS were addressed in one or both HRAPs.¹⁶

30. It should be noted that the absence of a major human rights issue area, such as the Right to a fair trial, does not mean that the Government is not actively addressing the issue. There have been a

¹⁵ Examples of this include listing action addressing Violence against Women under "Combatting torture" or clustering the Right to life with "Right to healthcare".

¹⁶ The issue areas are the following: Right to environmental protection; Freedom of association; Right to Culture; Rights of military servicemen and conscripts; and Improving human rights protection mechanisms.

number of human rights-related strategies and action plans adopted in recent years or being drafted on combatting gender-based violence, trafficking, judicial and legal reform, women and gender equality, and rights of the child to mention only a few. Omitting any reference to these major human rights-related policy documents undermines a key objective of the HRPS and its action plans, namely to present an overview and accounting of the Government's strategic commitments in the field of human rights.

Reference to human rights-related strategies and action plans must be included in the HRAP, either by duplicating some of the major commitments or by referencing those policy documents in either the tables or the introduction.

Application of M&E methodology

31. Having identified the issue areas addressed in the HRAP, a set of fundamental questions then arises as to how those areas are being addressed by Government, what the results are expected to be and what is the expected impact on the problem being addressed. It is important that these questions guide the drafting of any national action plan because answering those questions will later be the core purpose of monitoring, reporting and evaluating the plan. The results of the reporting and evaluation should then guide the drafting of the next plan in a transparent, methodical, and accountable process of policy-making and policy implementation.

32. To that end, a variety of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) principles and tools have been developed from international practice and are usually integrated to a national action plan. A fundamental principle currently guiding many NAPs internationally is the idea of "results-based" or "evidence-based" policy-making, which emphasizes establishing a clear link between Government actions and their intended impact on the problems they are addressing. Consequently, indicators are identified in a plan to measure outcomes as well as the implementation process. Although even quantifiable measurements can be open to differing interpretation¹⁷, it has been widely accepted that these and other fundamental M&E principles and tools must be built into any national action plan (NAP).

33. In Armenia, Methodology Guidelines for Strategies and Policy Documents (hereinafter referred to as the "Methodology Guidelines") were adopted in October 2017 in an effort by Staff of Government (Administration) to encourage and operationalize a standard and disciplined approach by the ministries to drafting policy documents affecting the State budget and finances. This is necessary given the tendency in any Government for ministries and other Government agencies to develop their own approaches to drafting policy documents, sometimes resulting in confusing differences in the format and terminology used in different plans. A basic term in one plan might go under a different name in another plan. Since so many policy documents, including the HRAP, are inter-ministerial in nature, monitoring and reporting can become unnecessarily difficult for the many reporting officers reporting under many inter-ministerial NAPs. The absence of a proper M&E framework will also impede public and international accounting thereby detracting from the credibility and usefulness of any NAP.

34. In the author's view, **the 2017 Methodology Guidelines are a positive and necessary first step toward establishing a proper M&E framework for policy documents in Armenia. The Guidelines will likely need further clarification and supporting processes and reference materials in order to have their desired impact on drafting, monitoring, reporting and evaluating national strategies and action plans. To that end, the Guidelines should be reviewed in close consultation with the Ministries to identify their impact and shortcomings. This should be followed by a thorough revision of the Guidelines, and**

¹⁷ For example, a low number of human rights complaints received by an investigating authority could mean that there are few human rights violations or that the complaints mechanism is either not credible or widely publicized.

further consultations to improve and finalize the text. Thereafter, regular training on implementing the Guidelines should be provided to Ministerial reporting officers.

35. In international practice, every NAP must contain, as a minimum, the following five basic M&E elements in some form:

- i. Long-term GOALS
- ii. Medium-term OBJECTIVES
- iii. OUTCOME INDICATORS measuring progress toward the objectives
- iv. Specific ACTIVITIES undertaken by Government to achieve progress
- v. OUTPUT INDICATORS measuring the activities that were implemented

36. Most of these five elements can be identified in most Armenian national strategies and action plans (the most commonly missing elements in NAPs are "outcome indicators" as most indicators identified measure only activity "outputs"). However, in many countries including Armenia, different names for these elements are employed in different documents, resulting in unnecessary confusion particularly among reporting officers. As an example, the author conducted a review of the two HRAPs and three major national strategies and action plans¹⁸ that were recently drafted with a view to identify whether the five basic M&E elements were present in the documents and how they were termed. The review also included an examination of the terms used and defined in the Methodology Guidelines. The results of the review of these four documents are shown in Table 5.

37. It should be noted that, of the six documents reviewed, only three (the Strategic Plan for Judicial and Legal Reform and the two HRAPs) had been officially translated into English. As shown in table 5, there are apparently numerous different terms being applied to the same concept in different plans, which accords with the author's experience in other countries. "Expected outcome", for example, corresponds to the "Outcome indicator" in the current HRAP, to the "Output indicator" in the previous HRAP, and to "Objectives" in some other action plans.¹⁹ Sometimes, the same terms may be applied differently within the same document, meaning one thing in the narrative portion and another thing in the implementation tables.²⁰ Furthermore, it appears that the Methodology Guidelines have identified three levels of goals /objectives /results, adding short-term "direct results" to the long-term goals and medium-term objectives that are usually required. In the author's experience, attempting to add short-term objectives /results only further confuses reporting officers without adding significant value to monitoring and reporting. The template in the Methodology Guidelines for the cover page required for submitting a draft plan to Government Administration appears to require the identification of no less than four levels of goals and indicators, which is not practical and can deter officers from trying to apply the guidelines.²¹ Most drafting officers find it sufficiently challenging to identify the long-term goals, the medium-term objectives and the corresponding indicators.

Table 5: Terminology for basic M&E concepts employed in selected Armenian policy documents

Concept	Definition	Corresponding terms used in Armenian policy documents
Goals	Long-term outcomes to be achieved in five or more years	Expected Results, Final Results, High-level Goals * Strategic goals **

¹⁸ The policy documents reviewed were: the 2018-2013 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reform; the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan for the Protection of the Rights of the Child; the draft (2018-2022) Men and Women Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities Strategy and Action Plan; the 2014-2016 HRAP; and the 2017-2019 HRAP.

¹⁹ See, for example, the tables in the 2017 Natural Disaster Risk Management Strategy Implementation Action Plan.

²⁰ See, for example, the use of "expected results" in the strategies on "Equal Rights" and "Rights of the Child".

²¹ "High-level goals", "Medium-level goals", "Mid-level goals", and "Direct results".

		Priorities *** (Missing) + and ++
Objectives	Medium-term outcomes to be achieved in two to three years	Interim Results and Direct Results; Medium-level goals, Mid-level goals * Strategic guideline, Measure (in tables) ** Objectives (in narrative), Expected results (in tables) *** (Missing) + and ++
Outcome indicators	Measurements of achieving progress in objectives or goals	Performance Indicators, Outcome Indicators, Output indicators * Output and performance indicator ** Expected results (in narrative) *** (Missing) + Expected outcome ++
Activities	Specific actions undertaken to achieve the objectives	Measures, interventions, program activities * Actions** + and ++ Events ***
Output indicators	Measurements of the implementation of activities	Performance Indicators for activities * Verifiable criterion for action performance ** Output Indicators *** Expected outcome + Verifiable standard of action implementation ++

** Terms employed in the 2017 Methodology Guidelines for Strategies and Policy Documents*

*** Terms employed in the 2018-2023 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reform*

**** Terms employed in the 2017-2021 Strategy for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and in the 2018-2022 Men and Women Equal Rights and Opportunities Strategy*

+ Terms employed in the 2014-2016 HRAP

++ Terms employed in the 2017-2019 HRAP

38. The Methodology Guidelines should be reviewed at the end of 2018 with a view to revise and enhance the document, taking into account the feedback from reporting officers in training sessions and a careful review of how the guidelines are being applied in practice. It is recommended that particular attention be paid to ensuring a consistent use of agreed-upon terminology and avoiding unnecessarily complex approaches to M&E. Consideration should be given to ensuring that appropriate M&E reference tools, including table templates with required and recommended fields, are available and that drafting and reporting officers receive regular and consistent training on drafting, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation. As discussed in paras. 85-89, consideration should be given to developing an online, digital platform for reporting, which is perhaps the most effective way to operationalize a common approach across ministries to drafting and reporting on policy documents while significantly easing the burden on reporting officers.

39. As noted in Table 5, there are no goals or objectives contained in the current HRAP nor are there any in the previous 2014-2016 HRAP. Both action plans are supposed to be based on the 2012 National Strategy for Human Rights Protection (HRPS), as noted in the official title of the current HRAP. The HRPS does contain a mixture of long-term goals and medium-term objectives listed section IV, "Human Rights Defense Strategy Directions", which is organized by human right. Of course, this had been done several years before the current HRAP was drafted and many conditions and some priorities have presumably changed. **In the future, updated goals and objectives must be aligned with specific activities /actions in a single document in order to facilitate better understanding by implementing officers and proper analysis and evaluation by stakeholders. Whereas Strategies may identify the main priorities over a span of four to six years, action plans should be based on an updated problem analysis of those**

priorities and should contain reformulated goals and objectives to give context to the actions described.

40. Additional points concerning the application of fundamental M&E methodology in developing and drafting a strategy and action plan are discussed in chapter IV below.

Linkages to other human rights-related strategies and action plans

41. International experience has shown that countries that have adopted an HRAP have usually adopted a number of other human rights-related national strategies and action plans. In Armenia, there are several other such strategies and action plans, as shown in Table 6. These detailed policy documents are too lengthy for their content to be simply imported into an HRAP, besides that a significant proportion of the document may not be appropriate for inclusion. However, it may be appropriate and desirable to select certain key commitments from other human rights-related policy documents for inclusion in the HRAP. One reason for doing so is to better publicize important Government initiatives, given that some NAPs and their reports may be less accessible to the public than an HRAP. Additionally, some annual NAP reports may not be well-publicized or considered by Parliament whereas HRAP annual reports generally are in many countries.

42. Perhaps most important is to avoid the false impression that nothing is being done. The present HRAP, for example, contains no commitments concerning the Right to a fair trial, although this is identified as a "main priority" in the HRPS. Indeed, much is being done on issue, as evidenced by the 2018-2023 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reform. **At a minimum, there should be a reference in the HRAP tables to this and other human rights-related strategies and action plans. When these important policy documents have been adopted after the HRAP, the Coordinating Council should approve an amendment to the HRAP containing the reference. International experience has shown that HRAPs should be considered "living documents" that should be updated and revised periodically to improve its accuracy and effectiveness. Where actions or commitments have been imported into the HRAP from other strategies and plans (including an Annual Government Workplan), there should be a column in the tables containing a link to the same provision of the other plan. The column may appear in the internal spreadsheet version of the HRAP for use by reporting officers to facilitate reporting.**

Table 6: Current human rights-related strategies and action plans in Armenia

Name of strategy or action plan	Corresponding HR issue areas
2018-2023 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reform	Right to fair trial, independence of the judiciary, access to justice
2017-2021 Strategy for the Protection of the Rights of the Child	Rights of the child
2018-2022 Men and Women Equal Rights and Opportunities Strategy	Women's rights and gender equality
2016-2018 National Action Plan on the Fight against Trafficking in Persons	Women's rights
2017-2021 Migration Strategy Action Plan	Rights of IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants
2017-2021 Comprehensive Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities	Rights of persons with disabilities
2014-2025 Development Strategy	Some civil and political rights; Many economic, social, and cultural rights,

	including Right to health, right to education, labor rights, right to an adequate standard of living, etc.
2017-2021 Strategy and Action Plan for Overcoming of Effects of the Ageing and on Social Protection of Elderly Persons	Rights of older persons
2018-2022 Strategy and Action Plan of the State Youth Policy	Rights of the child

Linkages to international recommendations

43. One of main purposes of adopting an HRAP is to respond systematically to the recommendations of authoritative international human rights mechanisms, which for Armenia includes principally human rights bodies of the United Nations, the European Union, and the Council of Europe. These bodies, such as the UN human rights treaty bodies, the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, and the mandate holders ("Special rapporteurs") of the Human Rights Council, review the human rights situation in detail and issues expert recommendations to each State party. While most of the recommendations adopted during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) are quite general in nature, the recommendations from the treaty bodies and the mandate holders can be very detailed and specific. Although the recommendations are non-binding, there is clear expectation that States parties are to address the recommendations and report on their implementation during the next reporting cycle. **A HRAP and human rights-related strategies and actions plans are potentially the principal tools for implementing accepted recommendations from the expert international human rights bodies. International experience has shown that these recommendations should be circulated by the Secretariat to the drafting officers from the ministries to be taken into account when a new HRAP or human rights-related strategy or action plan is being prepared.**

44. Drafting officers are usually the reporting officers as well and they will be called upon to contribute to the country reports submitted to the expert international bodies. Again, **an HRAP should serve as a principal tool for reporting to these bodies. In order to facilitate international reporting, there should be a column in the tables where a reference can be entered to the international recommendation corresponding to the action described.**²² This information may be one of a number of table columns that do not necessarily appear in the public version of the HRAP (in this case, for reasons of limited space on a printed page) but rather in a spreadsheet version of the HRAP that is used internally for reporting purposes. This will assist reporting officers is quickly retrieving the information needed for international reports. The same system for responding to recommendations and reporting on follow-up can also be applied to responding to accepted recommendations of a national human rights institution, such as the Human Rights Defender in Armenia.

Integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

45. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)²³ were adopted by the General Assembly in 2015, which means there is no reference to them in Armenia's Development Strategy 2014-2025, which had already been adopted by Government. The SDGs, however, are very broad statements and most of the content of Armenia's Development Strategy can be linked to the goals. Similarly, numerous actions contained in the current HRAP, particularly as regards economic, social, and cultural rights, can also be linked to specific SDGs.

²² This practice was integrated into the 2017-2025 "National Action Plan in the areas of housing, urban development and land management" where a column appears linking the action described to the relevant provision of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing.

²³ See <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

46. The value of SDGs is in the guidance they can provide in drafting policy documents, such as the HRAP, and especially for reporting on them. In order to monitor progress in achieving the SDGs, a revised list of over 200 indicators for the 17 SDGs was developed by the Inter-agency Working Group appointed by the Secretary-General.²⁴ Some of those indicators also appear in Armenia's Development Strategy 2014-2025. The National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia has developed an online platform with updated statistics listed for each SDG.²⁵ Many of these indicators can be linked to goals and objectives in the National Human Rights Protection Strategy that are operationalized in the current HRAP. Helpful online resources include the recent publication from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), titled "A Human Rights-Based Approach to Data"²⁶; the "Human Rights Guide to SDGs" by the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR)²⁷; the Universal Human Rights Index, which contains SDG linkages to recommendations made by the United Nations human rights mechanisms²⁸; and other SDG-related tools available on the DIHR website²⁹. **SDG indicators can provide some of the outcome indicators that linked to objectives which are necessary to measure the impact of Government interventions, but which are often missing in many of Armenia's NAPs. The next HRPS should contain an explicit reference to the SDGs and subsequent HRAPs should identify appropriate SDG indicators that can be used to monitor the impact of relevant HRAP actions. Linkages to specific SDGs can be included in the same table column as international recommendations, as described in paras. 43-44 above or given their own column for reporting. This will assist reporting officers when preparing international reports.**

Revising the current Human Rights Action Plan

47. During the first mission of the Consultant, the Ministry of Justice indicated its intention to revise the current HRAP, particularly as regards the membership of the Human Rights Coordinating Council. Additional recommended revisions to the current HRAP, as discussed in this report, are summarized in Table 7.

TABLE 7: RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO THE 2017-2019 HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION PLAN		
Recommended revision		Explanation in the Assessment Report
1.	Re-organize the articles by the rights heading	Paras. 17-23 (see table 4 and annex 4)
2.	Insert a column for implementation "Status"	Paras. 60 (b), 67
3.	Review indicators and reformulate them more precisely as necessary	Para. 60 (a)
4.	Change "implementation timeline" to "Completion Deadline"	Para. 61
5.	Refer to key Human Rights-related strategies and action plans	Paras. 28, 39-40 (see annex 4)
6.	Consider revising the Human Rights Coordinating Council mandate	Paras. 69, 80, 83, 96-102, 106
7.	Consider revising the "Procedure" section to further develop and clarify the reporting cycle by requiring concise, public, and analytical annual and final reports.	Paras. 79-85
8.	Include a brief introduction to the revision	Para. 15
9.	Include a table of contents	Para. 15
10.	Create a spreadsheet version of the HRAP for use by reporting	Paras. 63-67

²⁴ See "Revised list of global Sustainable Development Goal indicators", United Nations document, E/CN.3/2017/2, annex III (2017).

²⁵ See <http://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=655>

²⁶ Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/GuidanceNoteonApproachtoData.pdf>.

²⁷ Available at <http://sdg.humanrights.dk/>.

²⁸ Available at <https://uhri.ohchr.org/en/Summary/Country>.

²⁹ Available at <https://www.humanrights.dk/our-work/sustainable-development/human-rights-sdgs>.

	officers	
11.	Insert additional columns in the spreadsheet version for "SDGs", "linkages", "comments", etc.	Paras. 41-46

IV. DEVELOPING AND DRAFTING A NEW STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

48. A key shortcoming in the current HRAP is that there is no explanation or rationale for the activities contained in the Plan. In the absence of any explanation or justification, the activities appear to be randomly selected and without any connection to each other or to an over-arching priority problem or concern. The absence of any linkage of the activities to an identified problem analysis or strategy also undermines the eventual evaluation of the Plan which should seek to examine the effectiveness of the Plan in achieving the expected results. The "Expected Outcome(s)" (which are equivalent to "Objectives" in other action plans) contained in the HRAP do provide a criterion for measuring success, but there is no apparent linkage with other Expected Outcomes nor to addressing a larger problem that would normally be referred to as a "Goal".

49. **As a general rule, every action plan requires a strategy document that identifies priority concerns and provides a problem analysis that analyses and lists the major contributing factors that will be addressed by the action plan.** Good recent examples of this are the strategy documents and the corresponding action plans for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017-2021) and for Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women (2018-2018). Another approach is to combine the strategy and action plan in a single document. A good recent example of this is the 2018-2023 Strategy and Action Plan for Judicial and Legal Reform. This approach should also be applied in cases where the existing strategy document is too general or too outdated (and therefore no longer relevant) to serve as an effective foundation for the action plan. In general, it is difficult for a strategy document to remain relevant over long periods of time (over five years) due to changing conditions and the rise of new challenges. Even before the significant political changes brought about in Armenia in 2018, the Human Rights Protection Strategy adopted in 2012 needed to be at least significantly revised. Now, because of those changes, the HRPS should certainly be replaced. Discussions with Government stakeholders undertaken by the Consultant during his first mission have indicated a determination to do so as a matter of priority.

Developing a new Human Rights Strategy

50. Experience has shown that the adoption of a new Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan can be a key undertaking in a time of significant democratic change. The development and adoption of the new policy document provides an opportunity for a new Government to acknowledge and reflect popular expectation for change. It also provides an opportunity for Government to identify new priorities and to underline its commitment to change and to accountability. **The development and adoption of a new Human Rights Strategy should be a priority for the new Government in Armenia.**

51. **The timeframe for the development of a new Human Rights Strategy is relatively short since the document should be finalized and adopted during 2019. It is recommended that the Strategy should cover no more than four years, given that this is potentially a time of significant political, social, and economic transition and conditions and priorities three year hence may be quite different than they are today.**

52. The process of developing the strategy will be as important as the strategy itself in order to ensure widespread public recognition and support. Efforts should be made to ensure maximum transparency throughout this process. The first phase in that process should be **the identification of Priority Issues**

/Problems to be addressed. This should be undertaken in consultation with the major stakeholders for the Human Rights Strategy, namely civil society (including the media), regional and local officials, and the donor community (particularly to identify the latter's readiness to support new initiatives that may not be covered under the State Budget). It is recommended that at least one priority issue should be identified for each human right to be addressed in the Strategy.³⁰ Tools for undertaking the consultations include the use of a stakeholder survey /questionnaire and organizing focus groups and meetings, including in the regions.³¹ **The aim is to develop an agreed-upon list of Priority Issues will later be subjected to a Problem Analysis in the Strategy and which will therefore provide the basis for the next Human Rights Action Plan.**

53. The prioritization process **should take into account but not duplicate existing Human Rights-related strategies and action plans** (such as those covering Child Rights, Women's Equality, and Judicial Reform). However, the new Human Rights Strategy may **identify and address major gaps or omissions in those strategies.**

54. The prioritization process should **take into account the recommendations of the expert international human rights bodies, particularly the United Nations treaty bodies, the Mandate Holders of the United Nations Human Rights Council, and the human rights bodies and mechanisms of the Council of Europe. The recommendations of the Human Rights Defender should also be taken into account. To that end, it is recommended that a compilation of relevant recommendations should be made available to stakeholders (particularly civil society) for reference during the prioritization process.**

55. The second phase in the process of developing the Strategy will be **to carry out and draft a Problem Analysis for each of the priority issues** to be addressed. The Goals of the Strategy will be aligned with the Priority Issues. The Problem Analysis will concisely identify the main contributing factors which will be addressed through the Objectives or Expected Outcomes of the Strategy and its Action Plan. The Problem Analysis should be similar to the recent Human Rights-related strategies and action plans already cited (i.e., Child Rights, Women's Equality and Judicial Reform). The new Human Rights Strategy document should also contain: an introduction describing the aims of the document and the process for developing it; an overview of the implementation mechanism; and requirements for monitoring, reporting and evaluation. A listing of the basic elements for a Strategy Document are shown in Table 8.

BASIC ELEMENTS /TEMPLATE FOR A STANDARD STRATEGY DOCUMENT	
1. Introduction	
2. Vision /General Goals	
3. Priority Issues (complete the following sub-sections for each Priority Issue)	
A.	Problem Analysis (including linkages to international commitments, other strategies/action plans)
B.	Goal(s)
C.	Objectives or Outcomes ³² (generally 3 to 5 per goal)
D.	Outcome Indicator (at least 1 for each objective /outcome; identify any relevant Sustainable Development Goals and Indicators)
E.	Data Source (for the Outcome Indicators)
F.	Risks
4. Responsibilities and mechanism for coordinating implementation, monitoring, and reporting	

³⁰ This corresponds to the 21 human rights issue areas listed in annex 3 under "Civil and Political Rights", "Economic, Social and Cultural Rights", "Rights of Vulnerable Groups", and "Other Human Rights-related Issues".

³¹ See annex 4, "Guidance on consultations".

³² In practice, Objectives and Outcomes are equivalent and may be used alternatively. Whereas objectives are worded aspirationally (e.g., "To ensure that procedures are in line with international obligations"), outcomes have the same content worded as a factual statement (e.g., "All procedures are in line with international obligations").

Table 8.

56. An alternative format for a new Human Rights Strategy would be to maintain a format similar to that of the present strategy, which sets out general concerns and priority issues as well as defining the main target ("vulnerable") groups for the subsequent action plans. This form of a strategy document is essentially to serve as guidance rather than provide a detailed problem analysis. The advantage of this format is that a problem analysis may become outdated within only a few years. By the time a second implementing action plan is adopted, a new analysis with new goals and objectives may be necessary. If a general "guidance" format is chosen for the strategy document, then the problem analysis and the other basic elements listed in Table 8 must be included in the subsequent action plan(s).

57. Once the new Human Rights Strategy has been developed, the draft should be shared with stakeholders in civil society and the donor community for final comment. It can also be posted on the internet for public comment. **The Strategy should be developed during the first half of 2019 and then drafted and adopted in the second half of 2019, following national elections. This would allow sufficient time to evaluate the current HRAP (and its implementation and coordination process) before drafting a new plan.**

Developing and drafting a new Human Rights Action Plan

58. Experience has shown that when a Strategy Document has been properly drafted, the development of the implementing Action Plan is relatively easy as the goals, objectives, outcome indicators, data sources, and risks have already been identified. What is then left is to identify the Activities, their Output Indicators, the Responsible and Partner Agencies, the Implementation Deadline and Additional Funds required, if any.

59. **Like the development of the Human Rights Strategy, the development of the new Human Rights Action Plan should also be undertaken in a consultative process. However, the consultations on the Action Plan should be shorter because there will have already been agreement on the Priority Issues, the Goals and the Objectives /Expected Results.** It will be useful to carry out consultations on the initial draft Action Plan with stakeholders in civil society, regional and local Government and the donor community, while making the draft available on the internet as well. Input should be invited and taken into account when finalizing the plan.

60. **A suggested template for the new HRAP logframes is contained in annex 3.** The main differences between the suggested template and the current HRAP are the addition of the following two columns:

- a. **Output Indicator(s)** – Whereas the Outcome Indicator is supposed to measure or describe the progress achieved toward an Objective (or Expected Outcome), an Output Indicator is supposed to measure or describe the immediate results of implementing an activity. All indicators – whether for outputs or outcomes – should be "SMART", i.e., Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-focused and Timebound. Vague outcome indicators such as a legislative proposal "submitted to Government" should be avoided. **Output indicators should clearly describe what is to be produced in an activity so that there will be no confusion over whether or not that activity has been fully or partially completed.** The output indicator(s) should also provide insight into the larger situation. For example, an output indicator for training may be the number of persons trained, or the percentage of the target group that was trained. In contrast, the Outcome Indicator should take into account the overall results of implementing all of the activities associated with that Objective or Expected Outcome. The annual or final report will

rely on both Outcome Indicators and Output Indicators in reporting on the implementation of an action plan.

b. **Status** – This column is for updating the status of implementation for each activity in an action plan. It should be filled in with one of several standard responses that have been identified by the Secretariat in consultation with the reporting agencies. One example of possible entries for the "Status" column is: "Completed", "Partially Completed", "Ongoing", "Not Started"; "Cancelled". **The designation of the status is linked to the output indicators and must be demonstrated to and verified by the Secretariat. The procedure for verifying the Status of activities should be agreed upon by the Coordination Council.** The Status of an activity should be reviewed and updated every quarter by the Responsible Agency. Information in the Status column will be used to calculate the Implementation Rate, which is the progress in implementation for all activities in a plan, or all activities associated with a specific Goal or Objective. It can also be used to show the implementation rate by Responsible Agency. The result can be shown in a table or pie chart, for example, showing the percentage or proportional number of activities in each stage of implementation. The implementation rate should be a key monitoring measurement for the Human Rights Coordinating Council and it should be reported on in the semi-annual, annual and final reports. If the HRAP is entered on a spreadsheet as recommended, the implementation rate can be calculated automatically.

61. An additional recommended change represented in the suggested logframe in annex 3 is to **change the column for "Timeline" to "Completion Deadline"**. The reason for the suggested change is that it is not clear what "Timeline" specifically refers to. It may, for example, refer to when implementation is to begin, or when it is to end. It may even refer to the entire period of implementation, requiring two dates. Use of "Completion Deadline" is clearer in its intent and is more useful for planning and monitoring purposes. Of course, the completion deadline may be updated and changed during the quarterly reporting by Responsible Agencies.

62. Another recommended change in the action plan logframe is to provide separate columns for the Responsible Agency and the Partner Agencies, which are presently listed in a single column, making it somewhat unclear which agency has the lead responsibility. Alternatively, the column can be footnoted on the first page to explain the first entity listed is the Responsible Agency. Finally, it should be noted that the present entries under "Funding Source" are inadequate. **Guidance for proper costing and estimated deficits should be provided by the Ministry of Finance in cooperation with Government Staff so that an effective and uniform approach can be taken in the HRAP** as well as other strategies and action plans.

V. IMPROVING HRAP MONITORING, REPORTING, AND EVALUATION

Advantages of a spreadsheet version of the HRAP

63. Effective monitoring depends upon effective reporting. The present procedure for monitoring and reporting is based on quarterly requests by the Secretariat to Responsible Agency reporting officers to submit updated information on implementation. The information is then assembled by the Secretariat for use in the semi-annual public consultations and ultimately in the annual report. The present process is hampered by a number of limitations that need to be addressed.

64. One of the first limitations is the one imposed by recording information in a Word document, which limits the number of fields (columns) to be used in an action plan to what can fit on a sheet of paper. In other countries, it is more common to use an Excel Spreadsheet for collecting and recording information.

The expanse of a spreadsheet provides the possibility of adding additional fields for recording key information that can be stored, updated and referred to, particularly when it is time to draft the annual or final report. In addition to a concise description of the implemented activities (the outputs), such information includes, for example, notes and measurements of the outcome (also referred to as "impact" or "results"); risks and challenges encountered; success stories or failures; and recommendations for the next steps. Much of these notes are for internal use and it will be referred to and applied in an analytical annual or final report. In the absence of this information, reports will inevitably focus merely on descriptions of the activities undertaken. While a certain amount of such description is necessary, more attention must be given to an analysis of the results, referencing the outcome indicators ("Expected results" in the current HRAP).

65. As previously mentioned, a basic field or column missing from the current HRAP is a "Status" column, for indicating whether the activity was "Completed", "Partially Completed" or "Not Implemented". Calculating the percentage of activities in each category will give the Implementation (or Completion) Rate, which is a fundamental measurement necessary for all reports, whether quarterly, semi-annual, annual. Implementation rates should be calculated for the HRAP as a whole, by Priority Issue Area, and (internally) by Responsible Agency. Again, the calculations can be easily carried out automatically on a spreadsheet as opposed to a Word document. Normally, in an annual or an analytical final report, the annex should contain a copy of the action plan with the "Status" column filled in for all activities listed in the plan.

66. Other fields or columns that are useful in a spreadsheet are "Linkages" where references may be made to other action plans with the same activity, to ease the burden of duplicative reporting; "International recommendations", to reference activities that respond to international recommendations that will later be reported on in an international forum; and "SDGs" to reference relevant SDGs to facilitate later reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals. While all of this information is not necessary in the public version of an action plan, it can facilitate reporting under the HRAP as well as under other various international obligations.

67. It is recommended that the HRAP should also be available to reporting officers in Spreadsheet format and that additional fields for internal use should be included. A "Status" field (or column) should be introduced in both the public and spreadsheet versions of the HRAP so that implementation (completion) rates may be tracked for monitoring and recorded for reporting. A suggested template for the HRAP is contained in annex 3.

Structure and contents of reports

68. In international experience and best practice, there are generally three types of reports for HRAPs:

- a. Quarterly reports, which are generally for internal use by the coordination mechanism, and which are focused on updating the status of implementation for activities, including relevant developments and challenges arising;
- b. An annual report, for public information, focusing on implementation and developments for that year; and
- c. A final report for public information that combines the annual report for that year with an overview and analysis of the impact, successes, and challenges of the HRAP over its entire period of implementation, as well as recommendations for the future.

69. This pattern of reporting is generally mirrored in actual practice in Armenia, although more in form than in content. The requirements for reporting under the current Armenian HRAP are set out in its

Appendix No. 2, which states that sessions of the Coordinating Council to be held on a quarterly basis³³ to hear and discuss quarterly reports³⁴ as well as semi-annual written reports.³⁵ **There is no mention of either an annual report or a final report**, despite that these are key reports that potentially reach the larger number of stakeholders. In practice, only a final report (on the 2014-2016 HRAP) and semi-annual reports have been issued.

QUARTERLY REPORTS

70. The content of quarterly reports is not specified in the HRAP other than the implication that their purpose is to inform the Coordinating Council on the progress of implementation by Responsible Agencies. In practice, this should mean that each Agency should submit information to the Secretariat on the Status of Implementation for each activity that it is responsible for. There should be clear agreement by members of the Coordinating Council on what are the possible categories that Agencies should use to describe the Status of Implementation. In general, they may include "Completed"; "Partially completed"; and "Not started or delayed". There can be sub-categories under these three headings, depending on what information the Coordinating Council may find useful. However, care must be taken so that the categories chosen do not overlap, thereby causing confusion over how to characterize the implementation of an activity.

71. The Status of Implementation for each activity should be shown on a table that is updated by the Secretariat and circulated in the quarterly report. It should be noted that the Status for each activity and the Implementation Rate for the HRAP as a whole are fundamental measurements that should be updated each quarter and contained in the semi-annual, annual and final reports as well.

³³ Section II.5.

³⁴ Section II.7(1).

³⁵ Section II.7(2 and 3).

72. Once information has been collected on the Status of Implementation, then the Implementation Rate can be calculated and represented graphically in either a table or in a chart. The Implementation

Table 9

A. Suggested Reporting Template for Quarterly Reports

Please submit the following information to the Secretariat by (specified date):

1. **Activity** (number and description) If there has been no change or nor any developments in the implementing an activity, please note "no change" for that activity.
2. **Status:** Please note any changes in the Status of Implementation for each activity: (Select from the following: "Completed"; "Partially Completed"; or "Not Started or Delayed").
3. **Implementation Update:** In no more than 100 words for each activity, please provide a concise summary on the progress on implementing the activity during the reporting period (i.e. covering the last three months since the last report), including:
 - Any follow-up or response to the previous Public Hearings
 - Any information on any risks or issues that prevent or endanger successful implementation of an activity, if any; and
 - Any recommendations, if any, that can contribute to the implementation of the activities.

B. Suggested Structure and Content of a Quarterly Report

1. A title page and table of contents
2. A list identifying by number the activities for which there have been either a change in Status since the previous quarter or developments concerning implementation.
3. The Implementation Rates for the current quarter as compared to the previous quarter regarding:
 - The HRAP as a whole;
 - Each Priority Issue Area (e.g. Right to Health, Right to Education, etc.)
 - Each Responsible Agency, showing number of activities
4. A list of any activities that are due to be completed that quarter or the next quarter.

(Note: It is recommended that the report be presented in single or 1.15-spaced, 11-point font to make

Rate is based on grouping various activities and calculating the average percentage for "Fully completed" activities, those "Not completed", etc. Implementation rates should be shown for the HRAP as a whole. It can also be shown for each group of activities listed under the headings suggested in Table 4 above. Finally, the implementation rate should be calculated for each Responsible Agency identified in the HRAP. This last information may be for internal use only for discussion in the quarterly meetings of the Coordinating Council. Currently, no information is given in any of the reports on the Status for activities or the Implementation Rate for the plan, which is a major omission for stakeholders seeking an overview of implementation progress.

73. Besides the Status of Implementation, other important information to be collected for the quarterly reports are:

- a. Any risks or issues that prevent or endanger successful implementation of an activity;³⁶
- b. Any recommendations that can contribute to the implementation of the activities.³⁷

³⁶ Section III.9(3) of HRAP Appendix No. 2.

74. Any change in the Status of Implementation, as well as any risks, recommendations or issues affecting implementation can be presented by the Responsible Agencies in their oral presentations at the quarterly meetings of the Coordinating Council. **It is strongly recommended that Responsible Agencies update the Status of Implementation of their activities on a quarterly basis and the Secretariat calculate the Implementation Rates as suggested in paragraph 60(b) above. The form for collecting this information – as well as notes on risks and recommendations -- should be on an Excel spreadsheet to facilitate the calculation of Implementation Rates by the Secretariat for the quarterly, semi-annual, annual, and final reports. A suggested reporting template and structure for a quarterly report is contained in Table 9. The quarterly report should be aimed primarily at informing the Coordinating Council and it does not need to be a public document. However, the report's main points may be highlighted in a Summary Note on the quarterly meeting that is subsequently posted on the HRAP webpage and circulated to stakeholders.**

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTS

75. The content of the semi-annual reports is elaborated in Section III.9 to 10 of HRAP Appendix 2. Accordingly, the reports should contain:

- a. Summarized data on the progress of activities during the reporting period (i.e. covering the last six months since the last semi-annual report);
- b. Information on any risks or issues that prevent or endanger successful implementation of an activity; and
- c. Any recommendations that can contribute to the implementation of the activities.

76. The semi-annual report is the main document to be discussed at Public Hearings (as elaborated in Section IV of the HRAP) and it is intended to focus on implementation and developments that took place during the reporting period. However, the reports often do not contain the relevant information required by Section III of the HRAP appendix, despite that the reports are generally excessive in their length. A review of the two semi-annual reports covering 2017 identified the following deficiencies, among others:³⁸

- a. There is no reference to the status of implementation for most of the activities covered in the report, despite that this should be a key element;
- b. Sometimes the activities described in the agency report have no apparent connection to the activity contained in the HRAP;
- c. Some agency reports are too general or do not contain the necessary information to assess what has been done to implement the activity;
- d. There are significant differences in the length of the agency reports and the detail contained, and can range from a single sentence to over a page of description;
- e. In general, any information concerning risks, implementation issues, or recommendations for improving implementation – all required under Section III of the HRAP -- is absent from the agency reports;
- f. The length of the semi-annual report is too long and not sufficiently focused on the required elements.

77. Recent semi-annual reports are essentially a compilation of the information collected by the Secretariat from the Responsible Agencies. There is presently no template for reporting that is circulated

³⁷ Section III.9(4) of HRAP Appendix No. 2.

³⁸ Most of these observations were noted by the National Consultant working on the UNDP Project.

to the Agencies indicating the required information to be submitted by the agencies, which accounts for the unevenness and major disparities among the Agency reports.

Table 10.

<p>A. Suggested Reporting Template for Annual and Semi-annual Reports</p> <p><u>Please submit the following information to the Secretariat by (specified date):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Activity (number and description; this portion may be pre-filled by the Secretariat) Status: The Status of Implementation for each activity: (Select from the following: "Completed"; "Partially Completed"; or "Not Started or Delayed") Implementation Update: <u>In no more than 200 words for each activity</u>, please provide a concise summary on the progress on implementing the activity during the reporting period (i.e. covering the last six months since the last semi-annual report), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any follow-up or response to the previous Public Hearings Any information on any risks or issues that prevent or endanger successful implementation of an activity, if any; and Any recommendations, if any, that can contribute to the implementation of the activities. <p>B. Suggested Structure of a Semi-annual Report</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A title page and table of contents An Introduction by the Secretariat (not longer than one page) explaining the new report structure more aligned with the requirements of the NHRAP. This should include reference to the statistics on the Status of Implementation for the NHRAP as a whole (i.e., % activities "Completed", % activities "Partially Completed", % activities "Not Started or Delayed"). A section should also be included outlining plans to adopt a new National Human Rights Strategy and to revise the existing plan. The outline should briefly address plans or commitments to ensure effective CSO participation, particularly in the development of the new Strategy. A presentation of the HRAP activities grouped by Priority Issue Areas (as suggested in annex 1 of the Initial Draft Assessment and Recommendations Report). For each Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Activity</u> (number and description) <u>Status:</u> (as recorded by the Responsible Agency) <u>Implementation Update:</u> (the summary provided by each Responsible Agency; ensure that submissions are not in excess of 200 words by editing) <p><i>(Note: It is recommended that the report be presented in single or 1.15-spaced, 11-point font to make it more compact and manageable for the reader)</i></p>
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78. The use of standardized reporting templates is fundamental to improving the quality of the semi-annual reports for stakeholders. In addition to more systematically collecting the required information, the template should require more focused and concise summaries to be submitted by the Responsible Agencies. The length of the report should be no more than 35 pages (single or 1.15 spaced, 11 point font), which is roughly half the size of the previous reports. This will ultimately reduce the burden of reporting on the Agencies. Additionally, the semi-annual report should be organized by grouping related activities together by priority issue area, as has been suggested for the

HRAP as a whole in Table 4 above. Consideration should also be given to including a table of contents to facilitate easy reference. There should also be a paragraph summarizing any decisions taken by the Coordinating Council during the reporting period. A suggested reporting template and structure for a semi-annual report is contained in Table 10.

ANNUAL REPORTS

79. International experience has shown that a well-organized analytical annual report on the HRAP can become the “flagship” publication for the coordinating council and its secretariat, anticipated each year by Parliament, civil society and the donor community. It can also serve as a more effective tool to facilitate reporting to treaty bodies and other international human rights mechanisms. **A HRAP annual report should be made accessible to the human rights community and the general public by posting it on the internet before it is to be considered in Parliament. Although the current HRAP is not considered by Parliament, a well-structured annual report would likely be welcomed by the Human Rights Committee of Parliament. The report could be submitted for information rather than approval.**

80. In Armenia, however, the HRAP is silent on the issues of an annual report. The present practice is to issue only semi-annual reports, each of which is intended to cover a half year. There is presently, no concise overview of the implementation for that year, no indication of Implementation Rates, no analytical presentation of the results of implementation, and no information on the Public Hearings, the activities of the Coordinating Council or any decisions or recommendations that the Council may have made. A concise and more analytical annual report can be the main tool for raising awareness on Government efforts to implement the HRAP, the present lack of which is among the concerns expressed by representatives of many Responsible Agencies interviewed by the consultant. An effective annual report would also raise the profile of the Coordinating Council, which would be even more important if the present Coordinating Council should raise its level within Government and expand its mandate to include other human rights questions, as suggested in para. 94 (b) below.

81. **An effective annual report requires a greater focus on analysis and a more concise approach to description of activities than is presently the case for the semi-annual reports or the final report issued on the 2014-2016 HRAP. Ideally, the analysis should group all of the activities under each priority issue area³⁹ and focus on the progress and impact achieved at the level of goals and objectives for that priority issue area. Reference should be made to outcome indicators (showing impact on the target group, such as a decreased number of complaints from the beneficiaries /rights holders) and output indicators (describing the results of implementing an activity, such as X number of persons trained, representing X% of the target duty bearers). Reference should be made to the situation analysis contained in the Strategy Document.** While this should be the goal for future annual reports, it must be acknowledged that the analysis for the current HRAP must be more limited in view of the absence of any situation analysis underlying the current plan. As a result, there are no goals or objectives to refer to in an analytical report. Additionally, effective outcome indicators are missing for many of the activities listing in the current plan. The next Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan should contain all the main elements required for an effective annual report. Meanwhile, an annual report for 2018 should be organized along the following suggested structure shown in Table 11. A completed copy of the HRAP (with the Status of each activity filled in) should be annexed to the report for reference.

82. **The Coordinating Council should consider whether to issue a more comprehensive, concise, and analytic annual report covering the entire year, while retaining the semi-annual report only as a mid-year report. A well-structured annual report format would facilitate the drafting of the final report as**

³⁹ The priority issue areas are the "rights" headings suggested to organize the HRAP.

well as help to inform the drafting of the successor HRAP. The length of the annual report should be no more than 45 pages, excluding annexes. The reporting template suggested for Semi-annual reports (see Table 10) can also be used for annual reports. A suggested structure for an annual and /or final report is contained in Table 11. It is recommended that an annual report on the HRAP should be prepared covering 2018. The report should be adopted in the first quarter of 2019.

A POSSIBLE STRUCTURE FOR ANNUAL AND FINAL REPORTS	
a.	Title Page and Table of Contents
	Executive Summary of main developments and including the Implementation Rate for the entire Plan
c.	Descriptive /analytical overview for <u>each HRAP priority issue area</u> (this comprises the main body of the report)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Brief introductory overview of main partners and relevant sectoral NAPs */ b. Brief description of outputs and assessment of progress achieved */ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The average Implementation Rate for the activities in the issue area; */ ii. Highlight main achievements referencing performance indicators; */ iii. Refer to any success stories; */ iv. Assess any challenges, problems or failures (including funding); */ v. Conclusions and next steps */ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May contain references to relevant recommendations made by expert bodies, including treaty bodies and the Human Rights Defender
d.	Overview of the main HRAP supporting structures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. activities /decisions of the Coordinating Council during the period covered by the report ii. concise description of the Public Hearings and results iii. any additional activities undertaken by the Secretariat
e.	Concluding observations and recommendations:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. About the plan ii. The implementation process and associated structures (Public Hearings, the Coordinating Council, and the Secretariat) and iii. Next steps and possible priorities for next stage
f.	Annexes:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. HRAP logframes, including the <u>status of each activity</u> (e.g., "completed", "partially completed" or "not started") b. Any other pertinent information referenced in the report (e.g., Membership in the Coordinating Council, list of legislation or policy documents adopted, etc.)
*/ These sections are repeated for each Priority Issue Area	

Table 11.

FINAL REPORT

83. Although the HRAP is silent on the issue, a final report was produced for the 2014-2016 HRAP. The final report followed the form and content of the semi-annual reports produced for the 2017-2019 HRAP, namely descriptive summaries of the actions taken for each of the Plan's activities, listed sequentially by the activity number in the Plan. Some of the same deficiencies already noted for the semi-annual reports⁴⁰ also apply to the final report. Missing were any indication of whether each activity was fully

⁴⁰ See especially para. 76 above.

completed or the Implementation Rate by sector or for the HRAP as a whole. Perhaps most importantly, there was little information contained in the final report to measure the intended impact of the activities, given the absence of any demonstrated linkage to the 2012 National Human Rights Protection Strategy, which provided the basis of the Plan (at least theoretically). No information, analysis, or recommendations were contained in the final report on the overall implementation experience or the activities undertaken to support the Plan (i.e., the Coordinating Council and any Public Hearings). In the absence of such information (as well as either a mid-term or final evaluation), it is unclear on what basis the 2017-2019 successor plan was developed and drafted.

84. The final report should serve to replace the annual report for that year and, like the annual report, it is a key policy analysis tool for all HRAP stakeholders, including the Responsible Agencies, the Coordinating Council, the Secretariat, regional and local officials, CSO partners, the media, and international donors. The structure for the final report should follow the same as suggested for an annual report (see Table 11). A completed copy of the HRAP (with the Status of each activity filled in) should be annexed to the report for reference. Similarly, the reporting template for an annual report can also apply for the final report.

85. More effective reporting would raise the profile of the HRAP and the work of the Responsible Agencies, while reaching a wider audience. It is recommended that the Coordinating Council should consider revising the "Procedure" section of the current HRAP to further develop and clarify the reporting cycle by requiring concise, analytical annual and final reports. The Coordinating Council should decide on the structure and content of all reports (quarterly, semi-annual, annual, and final) and adopt reporting templates to be circulated to all Responsible Agencies to facilitate more uniform, concise, and comprehensive reports.

Development of an online reporting platform

86. Many of the problems and challenges encountered by the HRAP Secretariat in collecting information for periodic reports are the same as those experienced by other action plan secretariats in Armenia and elsewhere. International experience has shown that one of the most effective ways to deal with periodic reporting – lessening the burden on ministerial reporting officers and the Secretariat – is to employ an automated electronic platform for reporting. An important added advantage of such a system is to operationalize a common, standard approach to reporting across Ministries.

87. Of the various approaches the consultant has studied internationally, the most promising best practice was developed by the Public Service Development Agency (PDSA), a "Legal Entity in Public Law" (LEPL) operating under the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Georgia. Among its numerous functions, the PDSA serves as the secretariat for the implementation of the Georgian Migration Strategy 2016-2020 and its action plans,⁴¹ all of which are multi-sectoral policy documents like the Armenian HRAP.

⁴¹ Migration Action Plan 2016-2017, and Migration Action Plan 2018.

88. Faced with the usual challenges of monitoring and reporting under an inter-ministerial action plan, the PSDA decided to implement a “no-cost” online reporting platform, based on SharePoint, a Microsoft application. SharePoint is a web-based program for sharing secure documents among a specified network of partners and it is bundled with subscriptions to Microsoft Office 365, at no extra cost. Relying on its own IT team, PSDA adapted SharePoint to the content of the Migration Action Plan (MAP) and created a network of users from the implementing agencies and the PSDA secretariat. Formats which serve as reporting guidelines, are contained in the application they determine the type and amount of information to be entered by the reporting agencies (there are presently 12 reporting Ministries and Agencies, accounting for 284 activities in the action plan). This helps to

FEATURES OF THE ONLINE REPORTING PLATFORM DEVELOPED BY THE GEORGIAN PSDA

1. **Cost:** The software (SharePoint) is already bundled with Microsoft Office and is available to all Office users at no extra charge.
2. **Development:** the system was developed in-house by an IT officer and the officer who manages reporting
3. **Accessibility:** Although the system is located on the PSDA server, the system is cloud-based (at no extra charge from Microsoft) so authorized users are able to access the platform from any internet-connected device at any time.
4. **Security:** Access by reporting officers, their supervisors, and the Secretariat is secured by password. Users are able to access only those parts of the platform that concern them.
5. **Interface:** Reporting officers logging in are taken to a screen for inputting the required information. Entries are limited by the number (250-300) of words that can be entered, enforcing concise updating summaries. Supporting documents may be attached to the reporting entries and uploaded for the Secretariat. The Action Plan can be searched by the following components (a search function by word or phrase is also included):
 - Section and sub-section of the Action Plan (subject)
 - Responsible institution
 - Deadline of the activities (by quarters)
 - Source of financing (by donor organizations)
 - Status of the activity (has not started yet, ongoing, completed, completed late)
 - Responsible persons from the institutions
6. **Reporting alerts:** The system is programmed to automatically send out alerts to all reporting officers, instructing them to submit their quarterly updates online within a 15-day window. A second alert is automatically sent if no input has been received within 3 days of the deadline. If input has still not been received by the deadline, a third message is sent requiring an explanation from a supervisor.
7. **Monitoring:** The Secretariat double-checks the uploaded reporting entries. Once reporting has been completed and confirmed, the system exports the report and the action plan in Excel format to all concerned institutions.
8. **System maintenance:** The reporting platform requires only part-time management by a single professional officer and an IT officer, in case trouble shooting is required.
9. **System support:** A training module and a user guide for the reporting platform have been developed for new users.

Table 12.

standardize submissions, thereby lessening the need for Secretariat editing. The system of secure document-

sharing is protected by passwords and agency users see only the information that is related to their own inputs. Inputs are made directly into the action plan, which is downloadable as a Word document or Excel spreadsheet. Monitoring and reporting is carried out on a quarterly basis. The system has also been designed to minimize the burden on the secretariat. For example, update alerts are sent out automatically to all agency focal points (there are always two designated focal points in case of absence or re-assignment) each quarter at the beginning of the 15-day window for submitting updates. In case no information has been forthcoming after some days, another alert is sent automatically as a reminder of the approaching deadline. In the absence of any submission, a final message is sent automatically informing that the reporting deadline has passed and a formal “official” explanation is required in addition to the missing information. In the PSDA, there is only one person who manages the system, in addition to having other duties. She is supported by a single IT (Information Technology) officer, who is also responsible for other duties as well.

89. The system has a further advantage insofar it employs a cloud-based service – again, free of charge for Microsoft Office subscribers -- that can be accessed from anywhere, including at the office, at home or while on mission, including from a mobile device. The system is currently serving as the model for a unified reporting platform under development in Georgia by Administration. The aim is to have all Strategies and Action Plans located and accessed on a single reporting platform. A summary of the main features of the SharePoint-based reporting platform developed by the Georgian PSDA is contained in Table 12.

90. An online platform for tracking and updating HRAP implementation should be established as soon as possible. Consideration should be given to employing the SharePoint software, which is available at no extra cost. A study tour by the HRAP Secretariat to Georgia is suggested to examine the experience of the Human Rights Secretariat and the PSDA regarding their reporting platforms. The Ministry of Justice should also consider inviting the Georgian PSDA to share their experience in adapting the SharePoint software to reporting on the implementation of the Migration Action Plan. If cooperation between the two secretariats were established, the PSDA’s SharePoint application could be adapted for use in Armenia by appropriate changes in language, secretariat logos, action plan content, etc. The PSDA has also developed a User Guide to the platform and other training materials that could be translated and adapted to the Armenian context. A successful adaption of the online platform would certainly interest the secretariats of other inter-ministerial action plans, as well as the Staff of Government, which is trying to encourage a consistent and principled approach to monitoring and reporting across all Ministries.

Evaluation

91. Evaluation is ideally an independent and objective examination of the design, implementation and outcomes of a strategy and /or its action plan. They should be designed to focus in particular on the following aspects of a strategy and its action plan(s):

- a. Relevance - The extent to which the goals and objectives are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies. A mid-term evaluation also includes whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances;
- b. Effectiveness - The extent to which the goals and objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance;
- c. Efficiency - The achievement of results at the lowest costs (the ratio of results to the required costs (resources) should be determined);
- d. Sustainability - The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed and the probability of continued long-term benefits;
- e. Impact - Positive and negative, primary and secondary effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended; and

- f. Implementation - An evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of implementation process and structures for a development intervention.

92. Evaluations must be requested by the coordination mechanism and organized by the Secretariat. Multisectoral strategies and action plans, such as the HRAP, should be the subject of an external, independent evaluation rather than an internal one carried out by one or more Responsible Agencies. The terms of reference (TOR) for an evaluation should be drafted by the Secretariat and circulated to the Responsible Agencies before being considered for approval. The TOR should include list of key evaluation questions that must be answered in the evaluation report. The objectives and scope of the evaluation should also be defined in the TOR. Evaluations provide an invaluable opportunity for cooperating partners and stakeholders -- including CSOs, beneficiaries, and donors -- to analyze and provide feedback on past experience as well as to input into the future plan. The findings and recommendations in an evaluation report should guide the development and drafting of the next strategy or action plan.

93. Independent evaluations of policy strategies and action plans are usually required by a Government Administration. However, international experience indicates that, in actual practice, evaluations are frequently not carried out at all. Mid-term and final evaluations potentially provide key information to be used in revising an action plan or in drafting a successor plan. Unfortunately, there was no evaluation carried out on the previous HRAP.

94. It should be emphasized that any evaluation of the HRAP would be commissioned by the Coordination Council, not by the Ministry of Justice, which chairs the Council. The drafting of the evaluation terms of reference and the recruitment of a national evaluation expert would be carried out with the agreement and decision of the Council. The draft report would also be discussed by the Council and the final report would be received by the Council as well. In this way, the evaluation process would be the collective responsibility of the Coordination Council members, rather than the responsibility of the lead Ministry, the Ministry of Justice. The same principles and process would apply to other inter-ministerial strategies and action plans and their coordination mechanisms. In order to facilitate this process, templates for an evaluation terms of reference and for an evaluation report have been annexed to the present report.⁴² These templates are based on materials recently developed by SIGMA /OECD.⁴³

95. Final evaluations are normally scheduled to be carried out after the completion of a strategy or action plan and therein lies a fundamental problem. In actual practice, the drafting of a successor plan or strategy begins around six months before the end of the plan, whereas a final evaluation is likely to be completed only some months after the plan has been completed. If the main purpose of an evaluation is to inform the drafting and implementation of a successor plan, then **the timing of the evaluation must be planned to conform to the requirements of the policy planning cycle. In the case of the current HRAP, that means that an independent evaluation should begin during the first quarter of 2019 so that it has been completed by mid-year when the development and drafting of the new strategy and action plan will begin. Similarly, future human rights strategies and action plans should be evaluated near the beginning of the last year of the implementation cycle so that the findings and recommendations may be applied to the drafting of the next strategies and action plans. The evaluation should focus on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, and implementation of the 2012 strategy and its two action plans. A list of evaluation questions to be answered by the evaluator(s) should be**

⁴² See annexes 5 and 6.

⁴³ "Toolkit for the preparation, implementation, monitoring and reporting of public administration reform and sector strategies", (SIGMA /OECD, 2018). The Toolkit and its annexes are available at <http://sigmaweb.org/publications/strategy-toolkit.htm>

discussed in stakeholder consultations, approved by the Coordinating Council and included in the TOR.⁴⁴

VI. STRENGTHENING HRAP MONITORING AND REPORTING MECHANISMS AND ENLARGING THE STAKEHOLDER BASE

Coordinating Council

96. International experience has shown that an effective and authoritative inter-ministerial coordination mechanism is a key element to the successful implementation of a human rights strategy or action plan. In Armenia, that function is carried out by the Human Rights Coordinating Council, the membership and mandate of which is described in the appendix to the 2017-2019 HRAP. While the Secretariat for the Coordinating Council has been quite effective in its support for the Council and very proactive in its outreach to civil society stakeholders, there are a number of factors that need to be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of the Council and the impact of the HRAP. Those factors include, in particular: (1) the need to raise of the level of authority of the Council from the Ministerial to the Prime Ministerial level; (2) the need to take into account and integrate the work of parallel mechanisms coordinating the implementation of action plans that are closely related to human rights; and (3) the need to better incorporate the participation of civil society in the work of the Council.

97. When the Coordinating Council's mandate was drafted in the 2017-2019 HRAP, the Head Minister of Government Staff was identified as the Chairman of the Council, with the Minister of Justice as the Vice-Chairman. In actual practice, however, the Council has been convened and chaired by the Minister of Justice, a reality that will be reflected in a revised membership of the Council that will soon be promulgated by the Ministry of Justice. Many of the implementation coordination mechanisms for other action plans in Armenia are similarly chaired at the ministerial level by the ministry having the lead responsibility for the plan. However, human rights action plans often do not have a lead ministry since the field of human rights is so wide that no single ministry dominates the plan. As shown in Table 2, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs both have an equivalent number of activities in the present plan that they are responsible for. The responsibilities of other ministries – including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Science – can be expected to expand in future plans, with the role and responsibilities of the Ministry of Justice diminishing proportionally as the workload of other ministries expands. In such circumstances, it is best if the chairmanship of the coordination mechanism is at a sufficiently high level with the authority to supervise and direct the ministries implementing the HRAP, something which no lead Ministry is able to do. In the countries where national human rights action plans have been most successfully integrated into regular Government practice⁴⁵, the coordination and monitoring mechanism is chaired at the highest level of Government corresponding to the Prime Minister's Office. **Given the importance of human rights issues for the new Government in Armenia, the creation of a high-level Human Rights Council would be a visible sign of its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. As more Ministries can be expected to become involved in the future HRAP, particularly as regards economic, social and cultural rights, it will become increasingly important that the coordination mechanism is invested with sufficient authority to coordinate, supervise, and direct the implementation. It is therefore recommended that the creation of a Human Rights Council under the Prime Minister should be considered. Pending the results of the online stakeholder survey (see para. 4.b.) and the circulation of this report, stakeholder consultations should be held to consider the proposal. A proposed membership and mandate of a new high-level Human Rights Council is presented in Table 13.⁴⁶ The experience of the Anti-Corruption Council, which is already convened and supervised at the level of the**

⁴⁴ See annex 5.

⁴⁵ As measured by the number of successive plans that have been adopted and implemented.

⁴⁶ The proposed mandate is based in part on the draft SIGMA Toolkit, annex 5, pp. 2-4.

Prime Minister's Office, should also be taken into account when drafting the Council's terms of reference.

98. One of the challenges faced by Governments implementing a national human rights action plan is how to take into account and integrate the work being carried out under other human rights-related action plans. This problem was acknowledged in paragraph 48 of the Human Rights Protection Strategy, which listed several relevant human rights-related strategies and actions already being implemented. Since then, as noted in Table 6, additional human rights-related strategies and action plans have been adopted, which has considerably raised the possibility of overlap and duplication. There are a number of ways that the Government of Armenia can respond effectively to this challenge:

a. Some of the main initiatives contained in other human rights-related action plans can be imported and duplicated in the HRAP. However, this would entail duplicate reporting for the Ministries, which would add to the existing reporting burden and would be further complicated by the fact of different reporting cycles under different action plans containing the same activities.

-- or --

b. The HRAP can focus only on those priority issues arising that were not included in the other human rights-related action plans. In addition to those new objectives /expected outcomes and activities, the HRAP would simply make a reference to the other action plans under the appropriate headings.⁴⁷ While this approach eliminates the burden of duplicative reporting, it does give rise to another problem, namely that key human rights issues (such as women's rights, children's rights, rights of the disabled, etc.) become separated and "siloed" in isolated organizational structures rather than being considered in the broad human rights agenda that recognizes the inter-relatedness of all human rights issues. An additional drawback is that the coordination mechanisms for human rights-related action plans are most often at the Ministerial level, a level below that for a HRAP and carry less authority and visibility.

99. In terms of the burden of monitoring and reporting, alternative B is preferable to alternative A. However, alternative A is preferable to alternative B in terms of organizational effectiveness in integrating inter-related human rights concerns as well as enhancing authority and visibility. **The following integrated approach to coordination is therefore recommended:**

a. **The HRAP should not attempt to duplicate existing human rights-related strategies and action plans but instead reference those policy documents in the logframes. The HRAP should, however, address any gaps in those action plans as well as any key concerns arising.**

b. **A new Human Rights Council should be an "umbrella" human rights body that monitors not only the HRAP but other key human rights-related strategies and action plans as well. The various existing coordination mechanisms at the ministerial level – including the present HRAP "Coordinating Council" -- should continue to function as they are now. However, their reports and recommendations would be submitted to the high-level Human Rights Council, which would meet twice yearly to consider all human rights initiatives and concerns. This would not only raise the visibility and awareness of Government's diverse human rights initiatives, but it would also foster a more integrated approach to dealing with the country's human rights obligations and concerns.**

⁴⁷ See, for example, the suggested reference to the Women's Equal Opportunity Strategy and Action Plan which appears just before activity 60 in the revised HRAP contained in annex 3.

Table 13: PROPOSED TOR FOR A HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

CHAIRMANSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP

The Council may be chaired at the level of Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister.

The membership may include:

- All Government entities listed as "Responsible Agencies" in the HRAP;
- A representative each from: Parliament, the Judiciary, Prosecutor General, Special Investigation Service, Police, Prison Administration;
- The Human Rights Defender.

Observers (non-voting members) may include representatives from:

- Civil Society Organizations (selected on a rotating basis through a competitive process);
- United Nations, European Union and other donors supporting implementation of the HRAP

MANDATE

The mandate of the Human Rights Council may include the following tasks:

- Hear, discuss, and endorse all regular implementation monitoring reports;
- Steer the implementation by providing strategic guidance and policy advice;
- Identify bottlenecks and challenges to successful implementation and propose corrective measures to be taken by the implementing institutions;
- Consider recommendations and draft decisions as may be proposed by any working groups as may be established or as may be proposed by the coordination mechanisms of human rights-related strategies or action plans;
- Take corrective measures to strengthen the implementation, taking into account any risks;
- Resolve any issues between Responsible Agencies concerning implementation;
- Consider and approve any revisions to the HRAP as may be proposed;
- Coordinate with development partners present in the country on financial contributions and allocation of resources;
- Approve and adopt an annual report for public information.

MEETINGS AND WORKING METHODS

Meeting frequency may normally be twice yearly: mid-year to monitor implementation reports; and year end (or very beginning of the year) to review implementation and adopt the annual report. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairperson at the request of Responsible Agencies.

The detailed working methods and procedures of the mechanism may be developed over time. They may include, for example, the designation of Thematic Working Groups that meet quarterly and report to the Council meeting semi-annually. Civil society participation in the work of the Council should be encouraged, particularly at the level of the thematic working groups.

Thematic working groups

100. **The Coordination Council should consider establishing thematic working groups.** In international practice, the coordination mechanism for an extensive, multi-agency action plan such as the HRAP, is often organized along the lines of thematic working groups. Participation in the thematic working groups is usually at the level of the reporting officers and includes interested civil society organizations. In addition to monitoring the implementation of the HRAP, the thematic working groups identify challenges and problems as well as possible solutions. They may make proposals to be decided upon by the Coordination Council, including such revisions to the HRAP as a change in the completion date or a

change in the wording for the indicators. In that sense, they prepare the work of the Council, which meets to consider and decide upon the working group recommendations. Thematic working groups provide an excellent opportunity for interested CSOs to participate in the work of the Coordination Council at a level which does not undertake decisions, thereby safeguarding the independence of civil society. The establishment of thematic working groups should not impose a significant additional burden on the limited resources of the Secretariat, which must support the effective functioning of the groups. One solution is to have the thematic working groups meet twice a year to monitor implementation and prepare the work of the Council, which would also meet twice yearly to undertake its work at the policy-making level. That means the yearly meeting schedule for the Coordination Council and its working groups would be as follows:

- First quarter: Thematic Working Groups meet
- Second quarter (mid-year): Coordination Council meets
- Third quarter: Thematic Working Groups meet
- Fourth quarter (end of year): Coordination Council meets.

Strengthening the HRAP support and reporting network

101. The effective functioning of the HRAP drafting, monitoring and reporting processes depends in large part on an active and adequately staffed secretariat and a network of human rights focal points in the ministries that have been well-trained in M&E standards and practices. Typically, the main tasks of a Secretariat may include the following:⁴⁸

- a. Organize the work of the Council and its thematic working groups, if any;
- b. Regularly collect information on implementation from participating institutions;
- c. Prepare required regular reports and submit them for discussion and approval, including:
 - I. an analysis of the implementation completion rate of activities;
 - II. an analysis of progress against the objectives and targets;
 - III. an analysis of implementation challenges, bottlenecks and critical risks;
 - IV. proposals for any required corrective measures;
- d. Liaise with stakeholders, including civil society and donors, to inform and facilitate their participation and support;
- e. Publish public reports on the appropriate Government website after their adoption;
- f. Provide regular methodological support to ministries and government agencies in monitoring and reporting process;
- g. Organize an evaluation of the strategy or action plan; and
- h. Facilitate the drafting of a successor strategy or action plan.

102. As mentioned previously in this report, the Ministry of Justice Secretariat for the Coordinating Council is already among the most active of the many such secretariats supporting the various policy strategies and action plans adopted by the Government of Armenia. However, like other HRAP secretariats elsewhere, they are already under considerable pressure to keep up with the significant demands of their mandate. Those demands will grow substantially as greater expectations for human rights rise under the new Government. The implementation of the numerous recommendations contained in this report will add to those demands. Therefore, **consideration should be given to increasing the number of staff allotted to the Secretariat, possibly supplemented by secondments from other departments and possible university internships. Planning should include a training capacity to train new staff as they arrive as well as to provide guidance to new Human Rights Focal Points for the Responsible Agencies, due to expected turnover. In recognition of the Secretariat's key role as a bridge to civil society, consideration should be given to establishing a civil society focal point focused on**

⁴⁸ Based on the draft SIGMA Toolkit, annex 5, page 4.

exclusively on public outreach and securing greater CSO participation in the HRAP process as well as the other work of the Secretariat.

103. Although this consultancy did not include a component focusing on M&E practices across the Ministries, it is apparent from the range of strategies and action plans examined that there are different terminology and approaches across Government to drafting, monitoring and reporting on policy documents. These differences are likely to grow and diverge even more as additionally strategies and action plans are adopted and as the Ministries each develops its own particularly understanding and approach. It is, of course, incumbent on the Government Staff to define and operationalize common standards and practices to drafting, monitoring, and reporting, which can be extremely challenging. Ideally, reporting officers should regularly receive a common basic training in M&E practices that can be applied to all of their work, not only in regard to the HRAP. Such training, with a special focus on human rights, will be provided under the present consultancy to the Secretariat and its partners in the Ministries. However, **a long-term approach to encouraging and operationalizing a common and principled approach to drafting, monitoring and reporting should be strengthened and further developed by Government Staff. In the meantime, the single most important step in effectively operationalizing a common approach will be to develop and establish an online reporting platform for the HRAP, as described in paragraphs 86-90. This should be carried out in close consultation with the Strategic Planning Unit of Government Staff in order to ensure that it conforms to Government requirements and expectations.**

Promoting and facilitating greater CSO participation

104. The importance of engaging civil society in the HRAP is reflected in chapter IV of the current HRAP, which outlines the process for holding Public Hearings. Those requirements have been generally followed and the public hearings for NGOs have been regularly held. Additionally, there was a notable consultation process with CSOs during the development of the current HRAP.

105. Concern was expressed by a number of officials in the Ministries that there should be greater visibility for the HRAP and the efforts by Government to improve the human rights situation. A key element for improving Government visibility would be to increase the involvement of civil society in the development and monitoring of the HRAP. There is a vibrant and engaged NGO community in Armenia that includes many human rights organizations that should be more actively focused on the HRAP. **There should therefore be a multi-pronged approach to enhancing the engagement of CSOs in the HRAP and enlarging the base of its stakeholders, particularly at the regional and local level. The approach should involve greater opportunity for CSO input, greater feedback on their observations and recommendations, and a wider dissemination of updated information on the HRAP and the Coordinating Council.**

106. While there have been avenues for CSOs to participate and submit recommendations on the content and implementation of the HRAP, there has also been disappointment and a lack of clarity over what impact, if any, those submissions may have had. It was unclear what impact CSO submissions had on the final content and implementation of the current HRAP. Although the open discussions between CSOs and responsible officials at the Public Discussions are welcomed, there is need for more communication and clarity on follow-up to the Public Discussions. **There is a role for both the Secretariat and the participating CSOs in clarifying the results and expectations of the Public Discussions. On the side of the Secretariat, a concise note on the Discussions could be drafted to include: the venue and participating organizations (governmental, civil society and international); the main points raised in the opening statements; any particular concerns raised at the meeting, without specific attribution; and any decisions taken as a result. On the side of the CSOs, the participating**

organizations could outline their specific concerns and recommendations to the Coordinating Council in a single, consolidated note and submit it to the Secretariat following the Discussions. The more that the views and suggestions of the CSOs can be packaged in a form that can be circulated and referred to by Government, the more likely will their input be taken into account. **These concise notes from the Secretariat and from the participating CSOs, could be emailed to all recipients in a stakeholder mailing list, not only to organizations that actually participated in the Hearing. These notes -- as well as other concise notes summarizing the discussions and decisions taken at the meetings of the Coordinating Council – should also be made available in a webpage dedicated to the HRAP on the Ministry of Justice official website.** While this has been a practice with some other action plans (such as the Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan), it should be noted that there are often unacceptable delays in posting the material. **Timeliness is very important in maintaining stakeholder interest and engagement and delays in posting should be avoided. A regularly-updated, dedicated webpage would increase the visibility of the HRAP and encourage further engagement not only from CSOs but also from local officials, media, academia, and the general public as well.**

107. During the first mission of the consultant, a number of informants raised the issue of direct participation of CSOs as observers in the meetings of the Coordinating Council. In international experience, such participation by CSOs is often provided for in the terms of reference for a coordination mechanism. In many cases, CSO participation is provided in thematic working groups rather than at the level of the coordinating commission or council. Where CSO observers are allowed to participate in the coordinating commission or council, the selected CSOs should have the capacity and the commitment to play a constructive role in the meetings, representing, to the extent possible, the interests of the wider CSO community. Additionally, the selection process must be done in such a way as to exclude even the appearance of favoritism by Government, which can have very negative repercussions for both Government and the CSO community. **Participating CSOs can be selected through a competitive and transparent process involving the CSOs themselves and the CSO Observer seats can be awarded on a rotating basis to encourage wider participation and greater accountability of those organizations selected. The experience of the Anti-Corruption Council may serve as an informative example for incorporating the participation of CSOs. As set out in the statute of the Council⁴⁹, potential civil society representatives must be the qualifying criteria and have the written support of partner organizations. Formalizing the role of representative CSOs in the Coordinating Council (and also in a high-level Human Rights Council) may also encourage the CSO community to sharpen their suggestions and recommendations and build consensus for joint proposals before they are submitted.** It should be recognized that any coordination mechanism that provides for the participation of observers may nonetheless decide to hold some “closed door” or private meetings in addition to public meetings open to observers.

108. Another avenue for enhancing the participation in the work of the Coordinating Council is through the Public Councils mechanism organized under each Ministry, which could provide a forum for monitoring and assessing implementation of the relevant parts of the HRAP. **In accordance with the provisions of the Government decree on Public Councils⁵⁰, CSOs could submit comments, recommendations or even an alternative report on the HRAP and its implementation to the Ministry concerned. The Public Councils can provide a useful opportunity for CSOs to engage with and lobby Ministries before the meetings of the Coordinating Council take place. Ministries and other Responsible Agencies (such as the Police) participating in the Coordinating Council, should be**

⁴⁹ See Section III.7 of the Rules of Procedure for the Anti-Corruption Council, available at http://www.gov.am/u_files/file/xorhurdner/korupcia/165-N_ENG.pdf, (Annex 2).

⁵⁰ Governmental Decree of March 31, 2016 N 337-Ն

encouraged to make full use of the Public Councils and convene them as part of the preparation for semi-annual meetings.

Outreach to Parliament, local government and the public

109. The 2012 Human Rights Protection Strategy recognizes the importance of mobilizing Government bodies statewide in its paragraph 49, which directs that seminars, round tables and briefings on the implementation of the Strategy should be organized for "state and regional government bodies" to ensure the involvement of responsible persons. One of the main State bodies that is often implicated in a national human rights strategy and action plan is Parliament, which has until now not been formally involved in the Armenian HRAP. While the implementation of the HRAP is essentially the responsibility of the executive branch of Government, its goals and objectives are of interest to Parliament. Many of the activities in the HRAP involve the review or adoption of new legislation which may implicate Parliament. In many countries, the publication of an annual report on the national human rights action plan is timed for the opening session of Parliament and it is the main vehicle for informing and updating CSOs, regional government and the general public on its implementation. Similarly, **it is recommended that an annual report on the implementation of the HRAP should be communicated to Parliament, particularly the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs and Protection of Human Rights. The purpose of the submission should be to inform and update Parliament on Government's human rights initiatives.** The comments and recommendations from Parliamentarians could be taken into account by the Coordinating Council. Given the political changes recently brought about through the "Velvet Revolution", it is reasonable to expect that Parliament will play an increasing role in governance. In that connection, **it is recommended that a representative of Parliament, ideally from the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs and Protection of Human Rights, should be invited to attend the meetings of the Coordinating Council. A high-level Human Rights Council under the Prime Minister, if established, should similarly include among its membership a representative of Parliament as well as the Judiciary, since effectively addressing national human rights concerns often implicates those branches of Government as well.**

110. Although a HRAP is essentially a policy instrument of the national Government, the effective implementation of many of the activities involves regional and local officials. This implication was recognized by the inclusion of the Deputy Mayor of Yerevan as a member of the Coordinating Council, as specified in the 2017-2019 HRAP. There are a number of additional steps that could be taken to raise awareness among regional and local officials and more actively involve them in the HRAP. **It has been already recommended that regional workshops should be held during the development and drafting of a new Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan. Similarly, local governments could be encouraged to draft and adopt their own human rights action plan, with the input of local community activists and leaders. Such plans could provide a platform and a framework for local involvement in identifying and addressing priority human rights concerns.** The regional offices of the Human Rights Defender could be encouraged to participate in identifying and monitoring priority human rights concerns. **It has also been suggested that CSOs, potentially with donor support, could help raise awareness of the HRAP at the regional and local levels by carrying out a general human rights training, including on the Human Rights-based Approach, for local officials and community organizations.**

111. **The Coordinating Council (or eventually a high-level Human Rights Council), in cooperation with the Ministry for Territorial Administration and Development, could develop a local government and local community outreach strategy and programme.** For example, local government could also be invited to designate a local human rights focal point, who might be included in subsequent training initiatives. A human rights pilot programme for local government and community-based CSOs could be

supported in a best practice region to explore the possibilities. If successful, a national conference could be organized there later to create greater human rights awareness and publicize local initiatives.

112. Lastly, there are a number of steps that can be taken to promote greater visibility for the HRAP as well as the work of the Coordinating Council. As already suggested, a regularly updated webpage is needed, containing relevant documentation on the HRAP as well as information notes on the meetings and Public Consultations held by the Coordinating Council. A more proactive approach to public relations is also needed. This would include the periodic issuing of press statements, press briefings by a designated Government spokesperson, and occasional interviews of top officials. The launching of the annual report should provide an important opportunity for raising public awareness and facilitating a greater dialogue on the promotion and protection of human rights. An informed and empowered public is the essential ingredient in a human rights culture and a HRAP can be one of the most effective tools for achieving that goal.

VII. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

113. As this assessment report suggests, there are many possibilities for improving the HRAP and its Strategy Document, including the processes and mechanisms supporting them. Presently, the challenges to improving the strategy and action plan are manageable, since Armenia is still young in its experience of adopting and implementing a HRAP. Perhaps most importantly, the recent historic changes brought about by the "Velvet Revolution" have created not only the possibility of significant change but an expectation of change as well. The time has arrived when significant change – not just incremental change -- should be considered in order to give the HRAP the importance it deserves as the defining human rights policy document of Government, supported by a high-level Human Rights Council. It is hoped that this report will stimulate a constructive discussion and facilitate decisions on the way forward.

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Annex 1:

SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT

NOTE: These and other recommendations made in the report will be discussed with HRAP partners and stakeholders at a validation workshop facilitated by the consultant. The results of the online stakeholder survey will also be presented, and its implications discussed.

A. Recommendations for immediate consideration and action (2018)

1. Revise the current HRAP

Structure and organization (paras. 19-25)

It is recommended that the current HRAP (2017-2019) should be revised to include human rights headings and the actions should be reorganized to conform to the sequence and clustering of rights as suggested in table 2. The revised HRAP should contain a table of contents listing the headings for easy reference.

Mapping issue coverage (paras. 26-30)

Reference to human rights-related strategies and action plans must be included in the HRAP, either by duplicating some of the major commitments or by referencing those policy documents in either the tables or the introduction.

Revised logframes and a spreadsheet version

It is recommended that the HRAP should also be available to reporting officers in spreadsheet format and that additional fields for internal use should be included (paras. 62-63). A "Status" field (or column) should be introduced in both the public and spreadsheet versions of the HRAP so that implementation (completion) rates may be tracked for monitoring and recorded for reporting (paras. 64-65). Other additional fields are: Linkages to other human rights-related strategies and action plans (paras. 41-42); Linkages to international recommendations (paras. 43-44); and Linkages to Sustainable Development Goals (paras. 45-46). A suggested template for the public version of the HRAP is contained in Annex 3.

Suggested changes for a revised HRAP are summarized in Table 7. A version of the current HRAP (2017-2019) that has been restructured and reorganized along the suggested lines is contained in annex 4. Consideration should be given to adding a brief introduction to the revised HRAP, as suggested in paragraph 17.

Annual and final reports (paras. 79-85)

More effective reporting would raise the profile of the HRAP and the work of the Responsible Agencies, while reaching a wider audience. It is recommended that the Coordinating Council should consider revising the "Procedure" section of the current HRAP to further develop and clarify the reporting cycle by requiring concise, analytical annual and final reports.

2. Improve the reporting templates and the structure of reports

Consider and adopt new templates for reporting and structure of reports (para. 85)

The Coordinating Council should decide on the structure and content of all reports (quarterly, semi-annual, annual, and final) and adopt reporting templates to be circulated to all Responsible Agencies to facilitate more uniform, concise, and comprehensive reports. Reporting templates and report structure are proposed in Table 9 (quarterly reports) and Table 10 (semi-annual /mid-year reports). A proposed structure for annual and final reports is shown in Table 11.

Draft and adopt an annual report for 2018 (paras. 79-82)

A HRAP annual report should be made accessible to the human rights community and the general public by posting it on the internet before it is to be considered in Parliament (as discussed below). Although the current HRAP is not considered by Parliament, a well-structured annual report would likely be welcomed by the Human Rights Committee of Parliament. The report could be submitted for information rather than approval. It is recommended that an annual report on the HRAP should be prepared covering 2018. The report should be adopted in the first quarter of 2019.

Consider the creation of an online platform for reporting (paras. 86-90)

An online platform for tracking and updating HRAP implementation should be established as soon as possible. Consideration should be given to employing the SharePoint software, which is available at no extra cost. A study tour by the HRAP Secretariat to Georgia is suggested to examine the experience of the Human Rights Secretariat and the PSDA regarding their reporting platforms. The Ministry of Justice should also consider inviting the Georgian PSDA to share their experience in adapting the SharePoint software to reporting on the implementation of the Migration Action Plan.

3. Strengthen monitoring and reporting mechanisms and enlarge the stakeholder base

Coordinating Council (paras. 96-99)

Given the importance of human rights issues for the new Government in Armenia, the creation of a high-level Human Rights Council would be a visible sign of its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. As more Ministries can be expected to become involved in the future HRAP, particularly as regards economic, social and cultural rights, it will become increasingly important that the coordination mechanism is invested with sufficient authority to coordinate, supervise, and direct the implementation. It is therefore recommended that the creation of a Human Rights Council under the Prime Minister should be considered. Pending the results of the online stakeholder survey (para. 4.b.) and the circulation of this report, stakeholder consultations should be held to consider the proposal. A proposed membership and mandate of a new high-level Human Rights Council is presented in Table 13. The experience of the Anti-Corruption Council, which is already convened and supervised at the level of the Prime Minister's Office, should also be taken into account when drafting the Council's terms of reference.

Thematic Working Groups (para. 100)

Consider the establishment of thematic working groups to prepare the work of the Coordinating Council and to facilitate greater input from and cooperation with CSOs.

Strengthening the HRAP support and reporting network (paras. 101-103)

Consideration should be given to increasing the number of staff allotted to the Secretariat, possibly supplemented by secondments from other departments and possible university internships. Planning should include a training capacity to train new staff as they arrive as well as to provide guidance to new Human Rights Focal Points for the Responsible Agencies, due to expected turnover. In recognition of the Secretariat's key role as a bridge to civil society, consideration should be given to establishing a civil society focal point focused on exclusively on public outreach and securing greater CSO participation in the HRAP process as well as the other work of the Secretariat.

Promoting and facilitating greater CSO participation (paras. 104-108)

There should therefore be a multi-pronged approach to enhancing the engagement of CSOs in the HRAP and enlarging the base of its stakeholders, particularly at the regional and local level. The approach should involve greater opportunity for CSO input, greater feedback on their observations and recommendations, and a wider dissemination of updated information on the HRAP and the Coordinating Council. The participation of a limited number of CSO observers to the Coordinating Council serving on a rotating basis should be considered, based on the model for selection employed by the Anti-Corruption Council. A regularly-updated, dedicated webpage would increase the visibility of the HRAP and

encourage further engagement not only from CSOs but also from local officials, media, academia, and the general public as well. Stakeholders should be able to access or receive a summary note on the Public Hearings with an overview of the discussions and reference, without specific attribution, to the main points that were made. Ministries and other Responsible Agencies (such as the Police) participating in the Coordinating Council, should be encouraged to make full use of the Public Councils and convene them as part of the preparation for semi-annual meetings.

Outreach to Parliament, local government, and the public (paras. 109-112)

In view of what is expected to be an increasing role for Parliament in governance, it is recommended that an annual report on the implementation of the HRAP should be communicated to Parliament, particularly the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs and Protection of Human Rights. The purpose of the submission should be to inform and update Parliament on Government's human rights initiatives.

It is also recommended that a representative of Parliament, ideally from the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs and Protection of Human Rights, should be invited to attend the meetings of the Coordinating Council. A high-level Human Rights Council under the Prime Minister should similarly include among its membership a representative of Parliament as well as the Judiciary, since effectively addressing national human rights concerns often implicates those branches of Government as well.

It has been already recommended that regional workshops should be held during the development and drafting of a new Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan. Similarly, local governments could be encouraged to draft and adopt their own human rights action plan, with the input of local community activists and leaders. Such plans could provide a platform and a framework for local involvement in identifying and addressing priority human rights concerns.

A more proactive approach to public relations is also needed. This would include the periodic issuing of press statements, press briefings by a designated Government spokesperson, and occasional interviews of top officials. The launching of the annual report should provide an important opportunity for raising public awareness and facilitating a greater dialogue on the promotion and protection of human rights.

B. Recommendations for future consideration and action (2019)

1. Organize an evaluation

Evaluations (paras. 91-95)

The timing of the evaluation must be planned to conform to the requirements of the policy planning cycle. In the case of the current HRAP, that means that an independent evaluation should begin during the first quarter of 2019 so that it has been completed by mid-year when the development and drafting of the new strategy and action plan should begin. The evaluation should focus on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, and implementation of the 2012 strategy and its two action plans. A list of evaluation questions to be answered by the evaluator(s) should be discussed in stakeholder consultations and approved by the Coordinating Council.

2. Develop a new HR Strategy and Action Plan

Adoption of a new Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan (paras. 14-16)

Given the inevitable changes in the priorities of human rights issues and the capacity of Governments to address them, it is recommended that future National Human Rights Protection Strategies should cover a maximum of four to six years, accounting for only two cycles of implementing action plans. The present HRPS should be replaced by a new National Human Rights Strategy⁵¹ that represents the vision of the new Government and the expectations of the Armenian people, following the recent historic "Velvet

⁵¹ It is recommended that either the word "protection" should be dropped from the title of the Strategy or that the title be amended to read "National Human Rights Promotion and Protection Strategy", which more accurately reflects the dual nature of human rights initiatives.

Revolution". The new Strategy should be developed in a consultative and transparent prioritization process with civil society and adopted in 2019. A new Action Plan can then be developed, based on the new Strategy, and adopted to replace the present HRAP, which expires at the end of 2019. An independent evaluation and lessons-learned of the Strategy and its two action plans should be carried out in early 2019 and completed before the new strategy and action plan are developed, drafted and adopted.

Developing a new Human Rights Strategy (paras. 48-57)

The development and adoption of a new Human Rights Strategy should be a priority for the new Government in Armenia. The timeframe for the development of a new Human Rights Strategy is relatively short since the document should be finalized and adopted during 2019. It is recommended that the Strategy should cover no more than four years, given that this is potentially a time of significant political, social, and economic transition and conditions and priorities three year hence may be quite different than they are today.

The process for developing the new Human Rights Strategy must be consultative and transparent, beginning with the identification of the Priority Issues /problems to be addressed. The aim is to develop an agreed-upon list of Priority Issues will later be subject to a Problem Analysis in the Strategy and which will therefore provide the basis for the next Human Rights Action Plan. The process should not duplicate existing human rights-related strategies and action plans but address any major gaps or omissions in them. The prioritizations process should also take into account the recommendations of the Human Rights Defender as well as the expert international human rights bodies, particularly the United Nations treaty bodies, the Mandate Holders of the United Nations Human Rights Council, and the human rights bodies and mechanisms of the Council of Europe. A problem analysis on each issue should then be carried out to identify the goals, objectives, outcome indicators and their data sources. The Strategy should be finalized and adopted no later than during 2019, in order to demonstrate Government's commitment and to allow sufficient time to evaluate the current HRAP (and its implementation and coordination process) before drafting a new plan. A template for a standard strategy document is contained in Table 8. An alternative approach for the strategy is presented in paragraph 56.

Distribution of implementation responsibility (paras. 12-13)

It is recommended that the future Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan should contain a more equitable distribution of implementing responsibilities among Government Ministries, including those entities responsible for law enforcement. Care should be taken to identify priority issue areas and strategic activities for human rights, relying, where possible, on relevant recommendations from international human rights bodies as well as those of the Human Rights Defender.

Developing and drafting a new Human Rights Action Plan (paras. 58-62)

Like the development of the Human Rights Strategy, the development of the new Human Rights Action Plan should also be undertaken in a consultative process. However, the consultations on the Action Plan should be shorter because there will have already been agreement on the Priority Issues, the Goals and the Objectives /Expected Results. A suggested template for the new HRAP logframes is contained in annex 3. The main differences with the existing logframes concern the addition of: (1) a column for recording the "Status" of implementation, which will be used to calculate the Implementation Rate for the reports: and (2) a column for "Output Indicators" used to describe the goods or services delivered by the activity. It is also recommended that "Implementation Timeline" be changed to "Completion Deadline" for the sake of clarity and utility.

Structure of the HRAP (para. 17)

It is also recommended that the next HRAP should be expanded to include a brief introduction to the plan, in line with international practice that includes: the purpose of the plan; a brief overview with of the HRPS and its priorities and objectives; the relationship to the previous HRAP and to other current human rights-related action plans; an overview of the drafting, monitoring and reporting processes; and an overview of the mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the HRAP, namely the Coordinating Council, its thematic working groups, and its Secretariat. This introduction could serve as a “boilerplate” that could be updated periodically and adapted for use in HRAP information sheets, subsequent action plans, and an annual report. The HRAP should also contain a table of contents.

C. Additional recommendations for consideration

Application of M&E methodology (paras. 31-40)

The 2017 Methodology Guidelines are a positive and necessary first step toward establishing a proper M&E framework for policy documents in Armenia. The Guidelines will likely need further clarification and supporting reference materials in order to have their desired impact on drafting, monitoring, reporting and evaluating national strategies and action plans.

The Methodology Guidelines should be reviewed at the end of 2018 with a view to revise and enhance the document, taking into account the feedback from reporting officers in training sessions and a careful review of how the guidelines are being applied in practice. It is recommended that particular attention be paid to ensuring a consistent use of agreed-upon terminology and avoiding unnecessarily complex approaches to M&E. Consideration should be given to ensuring that appropriate M&E reference tools, including table templates with required and recommended fields, are available and that drafting and reporting officers receive regular and consistent training on drafting, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation. As discussed in paras. 85-89, consideration should be given to developing an online, digital platform for reporting, which is perhaps the most effective way to operationalize a common approach across ministries to drafting and reporting on policy documents while significantly easing the burden on reporting officers.

In the future, updated goals and objectives must be aligned with specific activities /actions in a single document in order to facilitate better understanding by implementing officers and proper analysis and evaluation by stakeholders. Whereas Strategies may identify the main priorities over a span of four to six years, action plans should be based on an updated problem analysis of those priorities and should contain reformulated goals and objectives to give context to the actions described.

* * * * *

ANNEX 2:

MAPPING OF ISSUE AREAS COVERED IN THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STRATEGY AND THE TWO NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION PLANS

Human rights issue area		NHRP Strategy "Main priorities" and "Vulnerable Groups"	NHRP Strategy "Strategic Directions"	2014-2016 HRAP Number of actions	2017-2019 HRAP Number of actions
1	Right to life ⁵²	Priority	Yes	Addressed under other headings, including "Torture" ⁵³	Addressed under other headings, including "Torture" ⁵⁴
2	Right to liberty and security of the person ⁵⁵ /Human rights of detainees	Priority	Yes (under "Right to life")	4 ⁵⁶	8
3	Freedom of thought, conscience and religion ⁵⁷	Priority	Yes	Addressed under non-discrimination and protection of minorities	1
4	Respect for privacy and family life	Priority	Yes	1	None
5	Right to a fair trial	Priority	Missing	5	None
6	Freedom of expression (and access to information)	Priority	Yes	4	None
7	Right to participate in public affairs ⁵⁸	Priority	Yes	1	3
8	Freedom of peaceful assembly ⁵⁹	Priority	Yes	1	1
Human rights issue area		NHRP Strategy "Main priorities" and "Vulnerable Groups"	NHRP Strategy "Strategic Directions"	2014-2016 HRAP Number of actions	2017-2019 HRAP Number of actions

⁵² Since the right to life primarily concerns the death penalty and the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers during the execution of their duties, measures addressing the Right to life should be included under "Right to liberty and security of the person", "Human rights of detainees", or "Human rights and law enforcement, depending on whether the action addresses the police, the prisons, or both. It should not combined with the "Right to health" under "Right to healthcare and life" (2014-2016 HRAP).

⁵³ The right to life was inappropriately combined with "Right to healthcare"

⁵⁴ The right to life was inappropriately combined with "Right to healthcare"

⁵⁵ Should include the prevention of torture here

⁵⁶ Relevant actions found under other headings

⁵⁷ As presented in the NHRP "Strategic directions", these actions are aimed at ensuring non-discrimination against minorities and promoting tolerance. They should therefore be properly included under that heading.

⁵⁸ Includes "free and fair elections"

⁵⁹ Usually, this is combined with freedom of association

9	Combatting torture and other abuses ⁶⁰	Priority	Yes	8	4
10	Right to health	Priority	Yes	3	10
11	Right to education	Priority	Yes	4	7
12	Labor rights	Priority	Yes	1	1
13	Right to property	Priority	Yes	4	1
14	Right to social security and an adequate standard of living	Priority	Yes	4	10
15	Rights of the Child	Vulnerable Group	Yes	15	10
16	Women's rights, gender equality and violence against women	Vulnerable Group	Yes	6	9
17	Rights of older persons (the elderly)	Vulnerable Group	Yes	4	1
18	Rights of persons with disabilities	Vulnerable Group	Yes	14	9
19	Non-discrimination and protection of national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities	Vulnerable Group	Yes	5	8 ⁶¹
20	Rights of refugees and asylum seekers ⁶²	Vulnerable Group	Yes	12	1
21	Rights of families of perished freedom fighters	Vulnerable Group	Missing	None	None
22	Rights of repressed persons ⁶³	Vulnerable Group	Missing	None	None
23	Right to environmental protection	Missing	Missing	5	3
24	Freedom of association	Missing	Missing	2	None
25	Right to culture ⁶⁴ (Cultural Rights)	Missing	Missing	5	1
26	Rights of military servicemen and conscripts ⁶⁵	Missing	Missing	4	7
27	Improving HR protection mechanisms	Missing	Missing	7	1

⁶⁰ Should be included under rts life, liberty and sec person and prev torture; action concerning violence against women should be listed under "womens rights" under a separate heading on VAW, including domestic violence.

⁶¹ Includes action 26 concerning hate speech

⁶² Should include migrants

⁶³ Unclear what this refers to

⁶⁴ Should be "Cultural Rights"

⁶⁵ Should be "HR and Military" under "Rights to life, liberty and security of the person and prevention of torture"

ANNEX 3

EXAMPLE SUGGESTED TEMPLATE FOR HRAP LOGFRAMES (Public Version)

Objective	Outcome Indicator(s)	Data source	Activity	Output Indicator(s)	Responsible Agency	Partner Agencies	Completion Deadline	Status	Funding Source

Figure X: Required Fields in the Public Version of the Action Plan logframes

NOTES:

1. Additional Required Fields for internal use only (accessible in a spreadsheet version or on a digital reporting platform)
 - SDGs (for each Goal or Objective)
 - Risks (for each Objective or Activity)
 - Linkages (for each Objective)
 - Comments (for each Activity)
2. There may be variations on this template, including a vertically-organized Results Framework (such as the one used for the Open Government Partnership Action Plan)

Annex 4:

Guidance on consultations

Consultations – both public and inter-governmental – are essential elements in each and every stage of the policy planning process. Along with the situation analysis and the performance indicators, the provision of consultations and meaningful follow-up to the information and recommendations they provide, constitutes an essential part of the "evidence" in evidence-based policy planning. Consultations with stakeholders, including beneficiaries, are particularly important during the policy development, drafting, monitoring, and evaluation stages of the policy planning cycle. As shown in the table below, the consultations may take a number of different forms or formats. It is important not only to take stakeholder input into account, but also to cite or summarize the consultations that were held, whether in the introduction to a strategy, an action plan, or a report, as these are all elements in evidence-based policy planning.

TABLE 2: Forms of consultations

Consultation Type	Main Target Groups	Cycle Stages	Comments
Interviews	Responsible agencies, CSOs, local officials	Development Evaluation	In-depth interviews are fundamental for engaging key informants at critical stages
Workshops	Responsible agencies, CSOs, local officials	Development, Drafting Monitoring Evaluation	A key format for bringing together Government and civil society partners. Needs to be well-structured to be conclusive.
Focus Groups	Beneficiaries	Development, Evaluation	Detailed consideration of issues and generation of ideas
Questionnaires, polling, and surveys	Responsible agencies, CSOs, local officials, beneficiaries	Development, Evaluation	Questionnaires may be combined with workshops. This includes user surveys and polling (by telephone or email) to rate services provided. Responses should be quantifiable.
Complaints mechanisms	Beneficiaries	Development Monitoring Evaluation	Well-publicized complaints mechanisms are a key source for identifying problems
Coordination mechanisms	Responsible agencies, CSOs	Monitoring	Observer status for selected representative NGOs or coalitions
**Public reporting is essential at all stages to keep stakeholders informed and engaged **			

Annex 5:

Template for an evaluation terms of reference

1. Background information and rationale

This section contains basic information on the strategy /action, including:

- Its general purpose and aims
- When it was approved /adopted
- Its specific goals /objectives
- The lead Ministry or coordination mechanism

2. Objectives of evaluation

This section should include information on:

- The reason for the evaluation and its expected use (such as to revise a strategy or guide the development of a new one)
- List the specific objectives of the evaluation, such as:
 - assess progress of implementation, progress achieved towards objectives, whether indicator targets were met, and what impact, if any on the goals of the strategy
 - assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms and procedures
 - examine any constraints and factors negatively impacting implementation or the functioning of the coordination mechanism and recommend how they should be addressed
 - assess the continued relevance of the strategy in terms of its goals, objectives, and performance indicators and recommend possible revisions

3. Scope of evaluation

The scope of the evaluation should be described regarding:

- the time period to be studied
- the data and performance metrics to be taken into account (such as the rate of implementation of the Strategy, the relevance of targets and indicators, etc.)
- the main documents subject to a desk review
- the data collection methodology to be employed (such as key informant interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, workshops, etc).

4. Evaluation Questions

These are the key evaluation criteria to be focused on (i.e., relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and implementation process). It should be noted that not all six criteria may be necessary for the evaluation. There should be a few questions listed under each of the evaluation criteria selected. There may also be questions about recommendations. Below is an example covering all six criteria and recommendations:

Relevance:

- To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid?
- Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
- Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended outcomes and effects?

Effectiveness:

- To what extent were objectives achieved or are likely to be achieved?
- What are the major reasons for objectives not being achieved?
- What are the main factors leading to any successes?

Efficiency:

- How cost-efficient has the implementation of activities been?
- Were objectives achieved on time?
- How efficient was the implementation process and institutional set-up?
- What has happened as a result of the program, both positively and negatively?

Impact:

- Have the intended goals been achieved?
- Was the initial problem analysis correct?
- What real difference has the program made to the beneficiaries?

Sustainability:

- To what extent did the benefits of the program continue after implementation ceased?
- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the program?

Implementation:

- How could the quality and efficiency of the implementation process have been improved?
- Did coordination mechanisms for monitoring and reporting function effectively?
- Were stakeholders, including the beneficiaries, adequately informed and engaged?

Recommendations:

- What lessons can be learned from the approach and implementation of the current Strategy and what could be done better in the future?

5. Technical and financial proposal

The section should include required documentation for application, which may include a short technical proposal (not exceeding 1500 words) should be submitted, outlining the methodology of the evaluation and including as a minimum:

- a short rationale demonstrating a clear and detailed understanding of the assignment and describing the methodology and framework that will be used
- a preliminary list of key documents to be reviewed
- a plan for how to conduct interviews and, potentially, stakeholder focus group discussions
- proposals for other data to be collected
- a sample of one or more previous evaluations, as well as CV(s) of the expert(s) that will conduct the evaluation
- a description of the individual qualities, skills and attributes of the expert(s) that will conduct the evaluation.

The financial proposal should provide as a minimum the total contract value and a breakdown of costs into the number of working days and the fee rate for each expert. If other costs are included in the proposal these should be clearly explained.

6. Roles and responsibilities

The main beneficiary of evaluation is the [Ministry name]. The main responsibilities of the Beneficiary are to:

- select and engage a contractor and manage their work, as per the assignment ToRs
- cover the cost of the assignment as per the agreed contract
- provide access to information and documents needed for the assignment
- contribute to the draft review report and provide feedback.

The responsibilities of the Contractor are to:

- prepare and present to the Beneficiary the initial work plan (inception report) and technical and financial proposal
- report to the Beneficiary regularly on the work progress as required
- produce deliverables as required by the ToRs within the timeframe
- provide draft deliverables for comments to the Beneficiary
- discuss comments of the Beneficiary and take them into consideration for the final draft evaluation report
- if necessary, prepare a short “main findings and recommendations” note no later than [month and year] to feed into the process of revising the Strategy and developing the new action plan.

7. Criteria and required qualifications

The required qualifications of the expert(s) conducting the evaluation are:

- a university degree in economics, management or other social sciences
- a minimum of 10 years professional experience in public administration and/or related projects (preference will be given to candidates who are able to demonstrate experience in evaluation of projects for public administration)
- proven experience in conducting evaluations for at least one strategy/programme/project evaluation exercise (reference to specific evaluations should be provided in the CV)
- high quality analytical and document drafting skills.

8. Deliverables

The deliverable of the assignment will be the final evaluation report of around 30 pages (not including annexes) in [language(s)]. The report’s structure should include:

- tables of contents, acronyms etc.
- executive summary
- introduction, including a description of methodology
- analysis of evaluation results, addressing the evaluation questions
- conclusions and recommendations
- annexes.

9. Schedule of evaluation

(Timeframe for when the evaluation is expected to be carried out and the deliverables submitted)

Annex 6:

Evaluation Report Template

The Evaluation report should contain at least the following elements:

Table of contents	This is necessary to show how the report is organized and to facilitate access by users
Executive Summary	A very concise form of the report meant to provide decision makers who can only devote a limited time to report reading. The executive summary should provide the key conclusions and recommendations.
Introduction	<p>The following details are presented in the Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need of the evaluation- Purpose of the evaluation- Key questions of the evaluation- Team of evaluators- Timing of the evaluation exercise- Other.
Description of methodology	In this section evaluation methodology is described: what data collection and analysis methods were used and which organizations or individuals were contacted.
Evaluation results	<p>The results of evaluation are summarized in this section. The results may be summarized in different ways – according to evaluation dimensions, questions, or other as decided by the evaluators or evaluation managers.</p> <p>The results of evaluation should summarize the key judgements and conclusions of the evaluation – data analysis and subsequent judgments. In this section the evidence is used extensively – the results of data analysis – in the form of graphs, charts, tables, etc. The recommendations should clearly address the next steps to be taken.</p>
Recommendations	A list of recommendations is summarized in this section.
Annexes	Any relevant annexes, such as a list of documents examined and organizations contacted, should be included.

Annex 7:**Suggested revised 2017-2019 HRAP organized by rights headings⁶⁶**Table of Contents

CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS	Action numbers
Rights to life, liberty, and security of the person	1 - 19
a. Freedom from torture	1 - 4
b. Human rights of detainees	5 – 12
c. Human rights and the military	13 -19
Right to fair trial	See reference to the Judicial and Legal Reform Strategy
Freedoms of association and assembly	20
Right to participate in public affairs	21 - 23
Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion	24
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS	
Right to health	25 - 34
Right to education	35 - 43
Right to social security and an adequate standard of living	44 - 53
Labor rights	54
Right to property	55
Cultural rights	56
Right to environmental protection	57- 59
RIGHTS OF VULNERABLE GROUPS	
Women's rights, gender equality, and violence against women	60 - 68
Rights of the child	69 - 78
Rights of persons with disabilities	79 - 85
Rights of older persons	86
Non-discrimination and protection of national, ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities	87 - 94
Rights of IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants	95
OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS-RELATED ISSUES	
Improving human rights protection mechanisms	96

⁶⁶ The content of the original 2017-2019 HRAP has not been altered in this revision, only the ordering of the actions, the addition of issue headings and references to other human rights-related strategies and action plans.

New No.	Old No.	Action	Expected outcome	Verifiable standard of action implementation	Responsible entity and co-implementers	Timeline	Funding source
CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS							
<i>Additional measures concerning Civil and political rights are contained in the 2014-2025 Development Strategy, section X.31-33, available at (web address)</i>							
Rights to life, liberty and security of the person)							
A. Freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment							
1.	9.	To develop sample forms for documenting tortures and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in compliance with the standards established in the Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul protocol)	The documentation of tortures and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in correctional institutions is conducted in line with international standards.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia Investigative Committee of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	Second quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
2.	10.	To conduct research in order to ensure rigorous enforcement of equitable indemnification schemes for alleged victims of torture and submit recommendations with regard to eliminating any deficiencies revealed	Potential deficiencies in the equitable indemnification schemes for alleged victims of torture have been revealed and avenues for their elimination have been outlined.	Research is complete with recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
3.	11.	To conduct training for law enforcement officers and attorneys on prohibition of torture and other cruel treatment	Prerequisites have been put in place to implement the prohibition of torture and other cruel treatment For effective implementation of the Legislation of the Republic of	Training courses are currently conducted.	Academy of Justice of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) School of Advocates of the Republic of Armenia (with	2017-2019, on regular basis	State budget of the Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is

			Armenia		the consent thereof) Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)		required)
4.	12.	To conduct research to reveal potential deficiencies and contradictions in direct reporting procedures to the jurisdictional body on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment	Research has been conducted to reveal potential deficiencies and contradictions in direct reporting procedures to the jurisdictional body on tortures and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Recommendations have been developed to address potential deficiencies revealed.	Research is complete with recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) Special Investigation Service of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) Investigative Committee of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	Second quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
B. Human Rights of detainees							
5.	14.	To review and introduce reforms in the legal framework regulating the terms established under the Legislation of the Republic of Armenia for changing the type of the correctional institution for convicts	Additional guarantees have been put in place to ensure favorable conditions for convicts serving life sentences.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.

		sentenced to life imprisonment and the recalculation of such terms based on subsequent offenses to provide a flexible mechanism for commuting convicts to correctional institutions with a less severe level of isolation. To review the rule for segregation of convicts sentenced to life imprisonment from convicts sentenced to a fixed-term imprisonment.					
6.	15.	To conduct research and consider the potential use of alternative means of communication (video calls) by inmates and detainees in their interactions with their family members and relatives considering the security requirements	Potential solutions addressing the use of alternative means of communication (video calls) by inmates and detainees in their interactions with their family members and relatives have been identified to enable them to maintain their social bonds.	Research is complete with recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
7.	16.	To introduce reforms in the legal framework regulating the release from imprisonment for sentenced convicts and release from custody for detained persons on the ground of severe medical conditions, to establish legal procedures for authorities conducting expert medical appraisals and to set up specific mechanisms for release from custody and exemption from serving the remaining portion of the sentence on the aforesaid grounds.	Additional guarantees have been provided for detainees and convicts to exercise their right of exemption from sentence for medical reasons.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
8.	17.	To review the ways in which inmates can exercise their right of communication with the outside world, particularly in terms of allowing detainees and convicts the usage of cellular telephones.	Legal grounds have been put in place to expand the possibilities for inmates to communicate with the outside world.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
9.	18.	To conduct research into the possibilities for detainees and	Prerequisites have been put in place to give inmates an	Research is complete with recommendations	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter,	No additional funding is

		convicts (especially foreign citizens) to use alternative means of communication to interact with the outside world.	opportunity to interact with the outside world through the Internet.	submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.		2017	required.
10.	19.	To provide appeal mechanisms against actions, inactions or instruments issued by officers of correctional institution clearly stating the courts of jurisdiction, appeal requirements and timelines.	Additional guarantees have been put in place to establish specific appeal procedures for inmates.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
11.	20.	To conduct research into the priorities of providing accessible environment for disabled persons in correctional institutions and to establish a matching action plan based on its results.	Prioritized prerequisites have been put in place to ensure adequate conditions in line with the needs of disabled persons in correctional institutions.	Research is complete with recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
12.	21.	To develop a bill of the Law on Legal Mutual Aid in Criminal Cases of the Republic of Armenia	The bill provides additional guarantees for the protection of human rights in offering mutual legal aid, particularly with regard to convicts who are nationals of the Republic of Armenia or foreign citizens serving their sentences in the Republic of Armenia to regulate their transfer, transfer under criminal proceedings and transfer for supervision.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
C. Human rights and the military							
13.	28.	To develop mechanisms for military conscripts to receive their medical checkup certificates on mandatory basis	Decisions by medical and military medical commissions appertaining to military conscripts and medical checkup certificates issued by medical institutions are now provided to them on mandatory basis.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
14.	29.	To establish reasonable timelines for submitting documents regarding persons demobilized for medical reasons prior to expiry of their term of service	Reasonable timelines have been established for submission of documents duly stating the reasons for early demobilization of persons demobilized for medical	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.

			reasons prior to expiry of their term of service.				
15.	30.	To incorporate the subject of Human Rights in the Armed Forces into the curricula of military educational institutions and make it available through the official website of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia for distance-learning purposes	Relevant changes have been introduced in the curricula intended for military personnel leading to an appropriate knowledge about the protection of human rights.	The subject of Human Rights in the Armed Forces has been incorporated into the curricula of military educational institutions and is now available through the official website of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia for distance-learning purposes	Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law
16.	31.	To provide mechanisms for military conscripts to receive information regarding the protection of their rights by developing a procedure for sending along with the draft summons a brochure clarifying their rights for draft deferment, exemption from military service, deployment in the vicinity of the place of residence and other rights	The awareness of their own rights has raised among military conscripts.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law
17.	32.	To put in place mechanisms for an observer group to conduct monitoring of military detention facilities in consideration of the requirements set forth under the Legislation of the Republic of Armenia and international best practices	Additional guarantees have been put in place to secure the protection of the rights of persons kept in custody in military detention facilities	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
18.	33.	Specify the characteristics of individual medical conditions/ characteristics giving rise to draft deferment entitlements for persons liable for military duty	Necessary conditions have been put in place to prevent discretionary decisions/opinions.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
19.	34.	To ensure a mandatory notification regarding any legal instrument (fines, etc.) issued in respect of military	The groundwork has been laid to enhance awareness of military conscripts, military servicemen and	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to	Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.

		conscripts, military servicemen and persons of equivalent status and issuance of a copy of such legal act to the serviceman in question or his family members as well as to develop a system to build awareness of the appeal mechanism in place	persons of equivalent status about the decisions that affect them with procedures put in place to appeal against such decisions.	the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia		
Right to a fair trial							
<i>For measures concerning the Right to a fair trial, see the 2018-2023 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reform, available at (web address)</i>							
Freedoms of association and assembly							
20.	13.	To organize continuous training for police officers on proper application of the Law on the Freedom of Assembly of the Republic of Armenia and international best practices during public meetings	The guarantees to exercise the freedom of assembly have been enhanced for the members of the public.	Approval of the course curriculum, offering of regular trainings.	Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	2017-2019, on a regular basis	Other means not prohibited by the law.

Right to participate in public affairs							
21.	22.	To develop modifications and amendments to the Law on Local Referendum of the Republic of Armenia	The bill provides for alignment of the law with the new legal premises of the Constitution and the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia by putting in place guarantees for individuals enabling them to exercise their right to participate in decision-making on a local level.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	Third quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
22.	23.	To incorporate in the school curriculum topics related to the electoral law of the Republic of Armenia	There has been an increase in awareness of electoral processes among high school students.	Topics covering the electoral law have been incorporated in educational curricula.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2019	other means not prohibited by the law
23.	24.	To conduct a comprehensive assessment regarding the exercise of electoral rights by the members of the public with disabilities (including persons using wheelchairs and suffering from hearing or vision impairments) and to take measures towards securing full exercise of their electoral rights	Prerequisites have been put in place to secure additional guarantees for Armenian citizens with disabilities to exercise their electoral rights.	Assessment is complete with recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Armenia	2017 – 2019, at regular intervals	other means not prohibited by the law
Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion							
24.	25.	To draft a bill for a new Law on Religious Organizations	The bill provides groundwork to enhance legislative guarantees for	The proposal for the legislative enactment	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter,	No additional funding is

			the freedom of conscience and religion.	has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.		2018	required.
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS							
<i>Additional measures concerning Economic, social and cultural rights are contained in the 2014-2025 Development Strategy, available at (web address)</i>							
Right to health							
25.	1.	To adopt a concept paper regarding the Law on Operation of the Medical Mediator System of the Republic of Armenia	The groundwork has been laid to introduce effective mechanisms to remedy breached rights of patients, and the rate of violation of their rights has decreased.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2017	State budget of the Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is required) other means not prohibited by the law
26.	2.	To introduce clinical guidelines based on best practices and adapt them for local use	<p>– The disproportion between the quality and scope of healthcare services has decreased;</p> <p>– the rate of inappropriate referrals for diagnostic testing has decreased; there has been a decrease in:</p> <p>– rate of unjustified hospital admissions;</p> <p>– average duration of hospital stays with a specific diagnosis;</p> <p>– average cost for commonly diagnosed health conditions;</p> <p>– a major indicator for quality assessment has been introduced i.e. compliance of processes employed by healthcare providers</p>	At least 200 clinical guidelines were adopted for 40 specializations.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	State budget of the Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is required) other means not prohibited by the law

			<p>with modern standards of the medical science that can be linked to funding volumes;</p> <p>– a substantiated and transparent legal framework has been established for interactions between healthcare providers and patients;</p> <p>– population coverage of individual aspects of screening programs has grown by 20%;</p> <p>– the efficiency of continuous vocational development has increased.</p>				
27.	3.	Localization and introduction of procedures based on best practices for management of patient files	<p>– The disproportion between the quality and scope of healthcare services has decreased;</p> <p>– the rate of inappropriate referrals for diagnostic testing has decreased;</p> <p>– there has been a decrease in the rate of unjustified hospital admissions;</p> <p>– average duration of hospital stays with a specific diagnosis has decreased;</p> <p>– average cost for commonly diagnosed health conditions has decreased;</p> <p>– a major indicator for quality assessment has been introduced</p>	At least 100 procedure guides were adopted for 10 specializations.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.

			<p>i.e. compliance of processes employed by healthcare providers with the modern standards of the medical science that can be linked to funding volumes;</p> <p>– a substantiated and transparent legal framework has been established for interactions between healthcare providers and patients;</p> <p>– the population coverage of individual aspects of screening programs has grown by approximately 20%;</p> <p>– the efficiency of continuous vocational development has increased.</p>				
28.	4.	To introduce healthcare information system	The system gives individuals access to the information on their health.	The system has been put in place.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2017	other means not prohibited by the law
29.	5.	To ensure public availability of statistical data (if any) captured at healthcare institutions of the Republic of Armenia on mortality rate classified by its characteristics (e.g. cause of death, disease, age, sex, type of disability, etc.)	The statistical data captured by healthcare institutions of the Republic of Armenia has become accessible to the public at large.	The electronic version of the statistical data published by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia can be accessed through the website of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
30.	6.	To review the legal instruments establishing the procedure for medicinal application of narcotics and psychotropic (psychoactive) substances	Legal groundwork has been laid to improve the process of issuing narcotics to patients in need of pain relief by introducing efficient procedures for receipt, registration, storage, prescription, administration and destruction of	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	<p>Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia</p>	Third quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.

			narcotics and psychotropic (psychoactive) substances.				
31.	7.	To improve regulations establishing the responsibility for development and dissemination of the physician-patient privilege including the liability for its violation	Guarantees have been put in place to protect the rights of patients and the physician-patient privilege.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
32.	8.	To form a public observer group to ensure the public supervision of the quality of services provided and the situation related to the protection of human rights in organizations offering medical and healthcare services in the field of mental health in the Republic of Armenia	The protection level of the rights of persons with mental health problems has been enhanced.	A public observer group has been set up.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
33.	65.	To introduce alternative models for provision of care and social assistance services to persons with mental health problems	The introduction of at least two alternative models (one in Yerevan, another one in a province) for provision of care and social assistance services to persons with mental health problems is planned.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
34.	69.	To take steps towards efficient prevention and counteraction of selective abortions	Conditions have been put in place to reduce the number of selective abortions.	Effective mechanisms have been set up including awareness building campaigns and discussions, particularly in provinces, and relevant legal instruments have been drafted, as necessary.	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
Right to education							
35.	46.	To develop and introduce mechanisms for detection and guidance of children dropped out of mandatory education programs	Prerequisites have been put in place for children dropped out of education programs to exercise their right to education.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the	First quarter, 2018	State budget of the Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is

					Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia		required) other means not prohibited by the law
36.	47.	To develop guidelines for children and their parents on usage of the Internet to secure the protection of children	The protection level of children in the digital environment has been enhanced.	Guidelines for children and their parents on usage of the Internet have been published.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	Third quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law
37.	48.	To guarantee general access to quality 12-year secondary education including general access and affordability of stream-based learning for all children irrespective of their place of residence, gender, social status, disability, religion and other characteristics	Additional guarantees have been put in place for quality education at the third level of the secondary education i.e. at high school.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
38.	49.	To develop a new funding scheme for mid-enrolled and under-enrolled schools	The development of the new scheme has resulted in additional guarantees for effective exercise of the right to education.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
39.	50.	To develop a code of ethics designed for the teaching staff of state general education institutions in consideration of Toledo principles	Conditions for the teaching staff of educational institutions to follow the code of ethics in their professional activities and public statements have been put in place.	The legal instruments have been adopted.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
40.	51.	To enshrine in the legislation of the Republic of Armenia provisions	The legal groundwork has been laid to prevent conflict of interest in	The proposal for the legislative enactment	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of	First quarter,	State budget of the

		excluding the conflict of interest in the administrative bodies of educational institutions	general education institutions.	has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Armenia	2018	Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is required) other means not prohibited by the law
41.	52.	To warrant scientific independence, impartiality, development of independent research thinking and unbiased scientific research systems in the system of higher education	Competitive and participatory procedures and schemes have been developed and put in place in higher education institutions for development and promotion of independent scientific research systems and distribution of funding allocated from own and state budget.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia State Committee of Science	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
42.	91.	To take steps to raise awareness about inclusive education among parents and teachers	The awareness about inclusive education has raised among parents and teachers. The number of children transferred from educational institutions offering special general education to educational institutions offering inclusive education has grown.	Awareness building campaigns have been conducted and relevant informational materials have been created.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
43.	92.	To put in place efficient mechanisms for organization of general inclusive education	The establishment of territorial pedagogical and psychological support centers provides for introduction of efficient mechanisms for general inclusive education, discovery and assessment of special conditions for each child and organization of education in line with such conditions to foster the accomplishment of objectives established in the field of education, particularly by providing equal access to inclusive quality	Territorial pedagogical and psychological support centers operate in seven provinces of the country, three-level pedagogical and psychological support is offered to children with special educational needs, a position for assistance to teachers has been introduced in general education schools.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.

			education for all children.				
Right to social security and an adequate standard of living							
44.	35.	To introduce a package of livelihood programs for needy families left out of social assistance programs implemented based on household poverty evaluation systems through district centers of comprehensive social assistance services within the limits of the specific public funding	More needy families are covered by social assistance and social assistance livelihood programs.	A need-based and efficient system for provision of social assistance has been put in place.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2019	To put up for discussion the possibility of allocating the required expenditures from the state budget of the Republic Armenia within the process of drafting the annual budget
45.	36.	To introduce an effective system for monitoring and assessing the efficiency of services and programs offered in the field of social protection	The groundwork has been laid for improving the quality of services offered in the field of social protection.	The monitoring and efficiency assessment system is operational.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
46.	37.	To develop and introduce an information exchange system on births and other acts in collaboration with the authorities of the civil acts registry office	There has been a decrease in the number of documents to be submitted by the members of the public, the efficiency of assigning pensions or benefits has been enhanced.	The information exchange system on births and other acts in collaboration with the authorities of the civil acts registry office has been introduced.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	other means not prohibited by the law
47.	38.	To introduce a single information system (electronic information system for social services) for the area of social protection in order to improve the social situation of the population considering the requirements set forth under the Legislation of the Republic of Armenia regarding the protection of personal data	The introduction of the system has given individuals and public authorities access to information with improvements of administrative practices in the social sphere.	The electronic information system for social services has been put in place.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2019	other means not prohibited by the law
48.	39.	To develop a fundamental legislative enactment establishing social	Minimum guarantees have been put in place to protect the rights of	The proposal for the legislative enactment	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the	Fourth quarter,	No additional funding is

		guarantees for families with multiple children	families with multiple children and to secure their public assistance.	has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	<p>Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia</p>	2017	required.
49.	41.	To streamline the poverty assessment methodology for households, to develop impartial and comprehensive criteria for household poverty assessment	The household poverty assessment system has been streamlined due to the application of new practices and methodologies in household poverty assessments; the allocation efficiency and targeting of living conditions improvement benefits (family, social benefits and ad hoc assistance) has improved.	Target indicators for household poverty descriptors have been developed, and improved methodology for household poverty assessments has been defined based on the households integrated living conditions survey including recommendations stemming from the results of multi-dimensional poverty assessments.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
50.	42.	To ascertain public assistance practices and matters related to the provision of such assistance to families with housing problems left homeless by the earthquake and entitled to improvement of housing conditions	Prerequisites have been put in place to discharge the incurred liabilities for solving the housing problems of 94 families left homeless by the earthquake.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	<p>State Urban Development Committee under the Government of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia</p>	Second quarter, 2017	Allocations from the State Budget of the Republic of Armenia
51.	44.	To improve administrative practices related to the provision of public	The applications to receive benefits for care of children under	There has been an expansion of electronic	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the	First quarter,	other means not prohibited

		benefits for care of children under two and lump-sum benefits for the birth of the third and every consecutive child	two and lump-sum benefits for the birth of the third and every consecutive child can also be filed online.	services in the field of social protection, an online application system has been put in place and is operational designed to claim benefits for care of children under two and lump-sum benefits for the birth of the third and every consecutive child.	Republic of Armenia	2018	by the law
52.	45.	To conduct research into enhancing the efficiency of the current system to provide supervision, care and sustenance with allocations from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia for minors and incapacitated persons left without supervision, care and sustenance due to actions by criminal proceedings authorities whereby a parent or a breadwinner is taken into custody	Prerequisites have been put in place to enhance the efficiency of the decision-making to provide supervision, care and sustenance with allocations from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia for minors and incapacitated persons left without supervision, care and sustenance due to actions by criminal proceedings authorities whereby a parent or a breadwinner is taken into custody.	Research is complete with recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Investigative Committee of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	Second quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
53.	87.	To conduct activities for training and occupational retraining of relevant workers for services provided in social protection institutions for population	Professional capacities and skills for specialized staff in childcare institutions have been built.	Occupational retraining has been conducted.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	State budget of the Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is required) other means not prohibited by the law
Labor Rights							
54.	40.	To consider the introduction of a national extrajudicial mechanism for	There are potential options for addressing the introduction of a	Research is complete with recommendations	Ministry of Health of the	Fourth quarter,	No additional funding is

		protection of workers' rights in work-related interactions	national extrajudicial mechanism for protection of workers' rights in work-related interactions	submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	<p>Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Economic Development and Investment of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia</p>	2017	required.
Right to property							
55.	54.	To institute legislative changes establishing reasonable timelines for appeals against the description protocols drafted for the property recognized as eminent domain	The legal groundwork has been laid for a more efficient protection of property rights.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
Cultural rights							
56.	53.	To conduct research into practices related to the movement of monuments over the past five years by identifying problems and presenting recommendations for their solutions	Additional guarantees have been put in place to prevent movement of monuments occurring in violation of requirements set forth under the Legislation of the Republic of Armenia.	Research results have been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
Right to environmental protection							
57.	55.	To draft a bill for a new Law on Protection of Ambient Air of the Republic of Armenia	Prerequisites have been put in place to ensure efficient management for protection of ambient air in line with modern practices and within the scope of sustainable development.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
58.	56.	To develop modifications and amendments to the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment and Expert Appraisal of the Republic of Armenia	Additional guarantee have been put in place to secure a more effective exercise of environmental rights.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.

59.	57.	To align the environmental legislation with the policies adopted in this field. To align with the decisions regarding Armenia adopted by the Compliance Committee under the Aarhus Convention, specifically on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice	Conditions have been put in place to align the legal framework and policies in this field with the requirements of the Aarhus Convention.	The drafts of the legislative enactments have been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	2017-2019, on a regular basis	No additional funding is required.
VULNERABLE GROUPS							
Women's rights, gender equality, and violence against women							
<i>For additional measures concerning women's rights and gender equality, see the proposed 2018-2022 Men and Women Equal Rights and Opportunities Strategy, available at (web address) and the 2016-2018 National Action Plan on the Fight against Trafficking in Persons, available at (web address)</i>							
60.	67.	To develop the 2017-2021 strategic program for provision of equal rights and equal opportunities policies for men and women in the Republic of Armenia	Priorities in public policies of the Republic of Armenia concerning men and women in all walks of public life have been identified irrespective of their gender along with steps to secure equal rights and equal opportunities.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
61.	68.	To introduce a mechanism/procedure to monitor and assess equal rights and equal opportunities policies for men and women	Procedures to monitor the implementation of equal rights and equal opportunities policies for men and women have been established.	The proposal for the legislative act has been submitted to the Staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2018	To put up for discussion the possibility of allocating the required expenditures from the state budget of the Republic Armenia within the process of drafting the annual budget
62.	70.	To introduce modifications in legal instruments warranting enforcement of the Law on Identification of and	Referral, identification and assistance procedures for victims of trafficking and exploitation in the	The proposal for the legislative enactment (enactments) has been	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is

		Support to Persons Subjected to Trafficking in Human Beings and Exploitation of the Republic of Armenia	Republic of Armenia have been made more specific.	submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	<p>Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Investigative Committee of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)</p> <p>Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)</p>		required.
63.	71.	To develop a referral mechanism for victims of domestic violence	The protection of rights for victims of domestic violence and their interactions related to the cooperation between public authorities to assist, identify and refer victims of domestic violence have been regulated.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	<p>Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia</p>	Third quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law
64.	72.	To establish criteria for the provision and assessment of comprehensive services to victims of domestic violence in order to follow a uniform approach with regard to the content, scope, terms, quality and security requirements of such services	Uniform procedures for provision of services have been developed.	Relevant legal instruments have been adopted.	<p>Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia</p> <p>Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia</p>	Fourth quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law
65.	73.	Establishment of state-funded	Assistance centers have been equipped to provide the following	Assistance centers for victims of domestic	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the	Fourth quarter,	other means not prohibited

		assistance centers in Armenia: a. To establish state-funded assistance centers in three provinces and the capital of Armenia	services to a minimum of 750 victims of domestic violence: healthcare and advisory assistance, effective assistance to victims and their families (including legal and psychological assistance, hotline), accommodation in asylum facilities in emergencies with the possibility of meeting primary individual needs and using public services for as long as direct threats persist.	violence have been established in Yerevan and in three provinces.	Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia Yerevan municipality (with the consent thereof)	2017	by the law
		b. To create state-funded assistance centers in all provinces and the capital city of Armenia	Assistance centers have been equipped to provide the following services to a minimum of 2,000 victims of domestic violence: healthcare and advisory assistance, effective assistance to victims and their families (including legal and psychological assistance, hotline), accommodation in asylum facilities in emergencies with the possibility of meeting primary individual needs and using public services for as long as direct threats persist	Assistance centers for victims of domestic violence have been established in Yerevan and in provinces.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia Yerevan municipality (with the consent thereof)	Fourth quarter, 2018	To put up for discussion the possibility of allocating the required expenditures from the state budget of the Republic Armenia within the process of drafting the annual budget
66.	74.	To sign the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence	Necessary steps have been taken to submit the convention for ratification.	The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence has been signed.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
67.	75.	To offer training to judges, prosecutors, investigators of the Investigative Committee of the	Prerequisites have been put in place for effective enforcement of the Legislation of the Republic of	Training courses are currently conducted.	Academy of Justice of the Republic of Armenia (with	2017-2019, on a regular	other means not prohibited

		Republic of Armenia and the Special Investigation Service of the Republic of Armenia, attorneys, police officers and social workers on the subjects of the prevention of domestic violence and protection of domestic violence victims	Armenia on prevention of domestic violence.		the consent thereof) Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia School of Advocates of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	basis	by the law
68.	76.	To develop a national plan of action related to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security	The priorities established by the Government of the Republic of Armenia to ensure representation and more active involvement of women in decision-making at all levels, conflict resolution and peace-building.	The action plan has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
Rights of the child							
<i>For additional measures concerning the Rights of the child, see the 2017-2021 Strategy for the Protection of the Rights of the Child, available at (web address) and the 2018-2022 Strategy and Action Plan of the State Youth Policy, available at (web address)</i>							
69.	27.	To review the evaluation criteria used for assessing the contents of television and radio programs of erotic nature, motion pictures containing depictions of horror and graphic violence as well as programs that may potentially have a negative impact on health, mental and physical development as well as education of minors	Specific criteria have been defined to regulate depictions of violence and other anti-social demeanor to the audience of minors.	Adequate criteria have been reviewed with a legal instrument adopted to such effect.	National Commission on Television and Radio (with the consent thereof) Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.

					(with the consent thereof)		
70.	43.	To offer training for officials engaged in the field of juvenile justice	Prerequisites have been put in place to ensure effective implementation of legislation in the field of juvenile justice.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Academy of Justice of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) The Chamber of Advocates of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	2017 – 2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
71.	84.	To reorganize “Vanadzor orphanage” state non-profit organization of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia into assistance centers offering multifunctional services to children and families in need	Day-and-night care offered to approximately 65 children at the orphanage of Vanadzor will be replaced by alternative daycare services. Services of various nature will be offered to the children of Vanadzor who find themselves in difficult life situations.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2017	State budget of the Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is required) other means not prohibited by the law
72.	85.	To reorganize the social protection system for population (childcare boarding institutions) within the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia into child and family support centers	Child and family support centers have been created. Services of various nature will be offered to the children of the province (community) who find themselves in difficult life situations. Day-and-night care for approximately 550 children boarded in such institutions will be replaced by alternative daycare services.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2017	State budget of the Republic of Armenia (no additional funding is required) other means not prohibited by the law
73.	86.	To classify the services offered in social protection institutions for population (specialized orphanages)	Care provided to children boarded in specialized orphanages in line with their health condition and care	The relevant legal instrument has been adopted.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2017	No additional funding is

		within the system of the Ministry of labor and social affairs of the Republic of Armenia	indicators.				required.
74.	88.	To ensure the right of children left without parental care to live in families, to enhance the efficiency of relieving the institutional load and introduce foster families	The process of forming foster families is regulated, the monitoring mechanisms for children taken into care by foster families have been put in place, the types and forms of foster families are defined, the load of orphanages is relieved and alternative services are developed.	The drafts of the legislative enactments have been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
75.	89.	To improve the regulation of the adoption process, to ensure the transparency of the adoption process, to introduce mechanisms for providing (limited) personal data on children available for adoption to persons willing to adopt	The adoption procedure has been improved, The new procedures have been established for provision of certain personal data on centrally registered children available for adoption to persons willing to adopt. The transparency of the adoption process is warranted.	The drafts of the legislative enactments have been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2018	No additional funding is required.
76.	90.	To sign the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure	Prerequisites have been put in place to provide personal communications in cases of violation of the rights of the child in best interests of the child for the exercise of the rights set forth in the optional protocol.	The optional protocol has been signed.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
77.	93.	To align the legislation of the Republic of Armenia with the requirements of the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction	Additional guarantees have been put in place for more efficient exercise of the rights of the child in conducting international child abduction cases.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
78.	94.	To align the Legislation of the Republic of Armenia with the requirements of the 1993 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction	Additional guarantees have been put in place for protection of the rights of the child in the foreign adoption process.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.

Rights of persons with disabilities							
<i>For additional measures concerning the Rights of persons with disabilities, see the 2017-2021 Comprehensive Program on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, available at (web address)</i>							
79.	58.	To provide employers with public aid, if they recruit persons uncompetitive on the labor market and persons with disabilities under employment regulation state programs.	The employment mechanisms for persons uncompetitive on the labor market and persons with disabilities have been streamlined.	Sustainable employment is warranted for persons uncompetitive on the labor market and persons with disabilities.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Economic Development and Investment of the Republic of Armenia	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
80.	59.	To offer persons with disabilities opportunities in the field of physical activities and sports	Conditions have been put in place for persons with disabilities to engage in physical activities and sports as well as to integrate into the society.	Necessary steps have been taken.	Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Yerevan municipality (with the consent thereof)	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
81.	60.	To improve the process of medical and social expert appraisal by establishing a new system that will clearly define disabilities using distinctive criteria to distinguish disease from disability	Clear criteria have been introduced to distinguish disease from disability.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
82.	61.	To review the Law on Population Protection in Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia and propose necessary modifications to provide appropriate humanitarian assistance to persons with disabilities in hazardous and emergency situations	An action plan and a schedule designed to provide assistance to persons with disabilities in emergency situations are available.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	Second quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.

83.	62.	Legal groundwork has been laid to ensure mobility and accessibility for persons with disabilities on premises of public use and in recreational areas	Legal groundwork has been laid to make newly constructed administrative and public-use premises as well as recreational areas accessible for persons with disabilities.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	State Urban Development Committee under the Government of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia	First quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
84.	63.	To develop a training program for professionals of various disciplines to work with persons with disabilities	The groundwork has been laid to offer training for professionals of various disciplines to work with persons with disabilities.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia	Third quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law
85.	64.	To expand the list of community centers offering social rehabilitation services to children with disabilities and their families	Community centers offer healthcare, access to medical rehabilitation, development and education assistance, access to extracurricular and recreational activities, development of independent life skills, family reinforcement and assistance services including temporary care.	The community centers offering assistance to children with disabilities and their family members have been created and offer their services to children with disabilities.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia Yerevan municipality (with the consent thereof)	Second quarter, 2018	To put up for discussion the possibility of allocating the required expenditures from the state budget of the Republic Armenia within the process of drafting the annual budget

Rights of older persons

For additional measures concerning the Rights of older persons, see the 2017-2021 Strategy and Action Plan for Overcoming of Effects of the Ageing and on Social Protection of Elderly Persons, available at (web address)

86.	66.	To establish new models for provision of care and social assistance services to the elderly and persons with disabilities as part of the reforms in the social protection system for the elderly in the Republic of Armenia as	The legal groundwork has been laid for: – expansion of care and social assistance services provided to the elderly and persons with disabilities, enhancement of the	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health of the	Second quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
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		well as to set up mechanisms for provision of care services on paid and co-paid basis	quality of such services and introduction of new models; – provision of services on paid and co-paid basis in institutions offering day and night care for the elderly, in home care and in day care centers; – improving the range and quality of services in institutions offering care services for the elderly.		Republic of Armenia Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia		
Non-discrimination and protection of national, ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities							
87.	26.	To conduct research into the expediency of introducing potential models for criminalization of hate speech in line with recommendations presented by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 1997 and the Parliamentary Assembly in 2007	The groundwork has been laid to conduct efficiency assessment of preventive action against demonstrations of hate speech.	Research is complete with recommendations submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
88.	77.	To establish legislative mechanisms to enforce equality as set forth under the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia	Legal groundwork has been laid to enforce the general equality before law and prohibition of discrimination.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
89.	78.	To establish an independent and efficient body to enforce general equality and prohibition of discrimination	To establish an independent and efficient body to enforce general equality and prohibition of discrimination	The institutional body tasked with enforcement of general equality and prohibition of discrimination is operative.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	Third quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law
90.	79.	To develop educational and informational materials concerning the application of the national legislation for enforcement of equality and prohibition of discrimination	Additional groundwork has been laid for capacity building of judges with regard to the application of the national legislation for enforcement of equality and prohibition of discrimination	The materials have been published.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia Academy of Justice of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) Staff of the Human Rights	Fourth quarter, 2018	other means not prohibited by the law

					Defender of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)		
91.	80.	To offer training to judges and attorneys on the application of the national legislation for enforcement of equality and prohibition of discrimination	The skills of judges and attorneys in the application of the national legislation for enforcement of equality and prohibition of discrimination have been enhanced.	Training courses are currently conducted.	Academy of Justice of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof) School of Advocates of the Republic of Armenia (with the consent thereof)	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
92.	81.	To review criteria established for the contents of educational and methodological materials designed to eliminate the perpetuation of discrimination and intolerance stereotypes based on Toledo principles, UNESCO Convention against discrimination in education and UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities	The reviewed curriculum and subject criteria for the general education have been developed and adopted based on the fundamental principles and values of equal rights, tolerance, human rights and democracy.	The legal instruments have been adopted.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2019	No additional funding is required.
93.	82.	To develop a law regulating the exercise of rights for persons belonging to ethnic minorities to preserve and develop their national and ethnic identity, traditions, religion, language and culture	Legislative groundwork has been laid to exercise the rights related to the preservation of national and ethnic identity.	The proposal for the legislative enactment has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia	Fourth quarter, 2017	No additional funding is required.
94.	83.	To conduct research into the needs of and available opportunities for teachers who offer instruction in the languages of ethnic minorities, teaching staff and new educational programs	New approaches have been integrated into the training programs for teachers who offer instruction in the languages of ethnic minorities.	Research is complete with results submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia and relevant changes introduced.	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law
Rights of IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants							
<i>For additional measures concerning the Rights of IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, see the 2017-2021 Migration Strategy Action Plan, available at (web address)</i>							
95.	95.	To implement programs that contribute to the solution of problems related to educational, cultural, social and economic integration of Syrian	As a result of implemented programs, conditions have been put in place for integration of Syrian refugees in educational,	Programs are implemented.	Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia	2017-2019, on a regular basis	other means not prohibited by the law

		refugees	cultural, social and economic life.				
OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS-RELATED ISSUES							
Improvement of mechanisms for the protection of human rights							
96.	96.	To discuss in public councils under the Minister of the Republic of Armenia the progress of measures included in this action plan together with other measures aimed at protection of human rights by a relevant ministry	The transparency of activities in the field of human rights has been ensured with a platform operating for discussion of matters in the field of human rights protection with representatives of the civil society.	Discussions are organized on a regular basis in public councils under the Minister of the Republic of Armenia.	Ministries of the Republic of Armenia	2017-2019, on a regular basis	No additional funding is required.

**Republic of Armenia
HEAD-MINISTER OF STAFF OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA,**

D. Harutyunyan

**Appendix No. 2
to the Governmental Decree N 483- N of the
Republic of Armenia dated May 4, 2017**

PROCEDURE

FOR ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVITIES OF THE COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2017-2019 ACTION PLAN BASED ON NATIONAL STRATEGY OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. This Appendix shall regulate the relations associated with formation of the Coordinating Council for Implementation of the 2017-2019 Action Plan based on the National Strategy for Protection of Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as the Coordinating Council) and the organization of its activities.
2. In implementing its activities, the Coordinating Council shall be guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, Legislation of the Republic of Armenia and this Procedure.

II. OBJECTIVE, COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COORDINATING COUNCIL

3. The main objective of the coordinating Council consists in coordinating, monitoring and contributing to the implementation of the 2017-2019 Action Plan Based on National Strategy of Human Rights Protection (hereinafter referred to as Action Plan).

4. The Coordinating Council shall be composed of the Head-Minister of Staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Chairman of the Council), Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia (Vice-Chairman of the Council), Human Rights Defender or Head of Staff Department of the Human Rights Defender (with the consent thereof), Deputy Minister of Health of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Finance of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Investment of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, Deputy Chief of Police of the Republic of Armenia under the Government of the Republic of Armenia, The Deputy Prosecutor General of the Republic of Armenia (with consent thereof), Deputy Head of the Investigative Committee of the Republic of Armenia (with consent thereof), Deputy Mayor of Yerevan (with consent thereof) and Deputy Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia (Secretary of the Council, Program Coordinator).

5. The Coordinating Council shall organize its activities through sessions held at least once in a quarter. The Chairman of the Council shall conduct the sessions of the Coordinating Council, and in his/her absence Vice-Chairman of the Council shall do so.

6. At least seven days prior to a session, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia shall advise the members of the Council of the day, time, venue and agenda of such session. Relevant documents concerning the items included on the session agenda (opinions, recommendations, etc., if any) shall be made available to the participants of such session in advance by electronic mail at least three days prior to the date of such session.

7. Coordinating Council shall:

- 1) hear and discuss quarterly progress reports on the implementation of the program by responsible national executive bodies and statutory public authorities;
- 2) examine and discuss semi-annual written reports on the implementation of the program by responsible national executive bodies and statutory public authorities;
- 3) organize public discussions to discuss semi-annual written reports on the implementation of the program by responsible national executive bodies and statutory public authorities;
- 4) submit recommendations to promote the efficiency of the program implementation and foster its progress after examining and discussing the reports by responsible national executive bodies and statutory public authorities.

8. The decisions of the Coordinating Council shall be adopted by a simple majority of votes.

III. SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTS

9. Semi-annual written reports submitted by responsible national executive bodies and statutory public authorities shall contain summarized data on the progress of activities established under the program, particularly:

- 1) with regard to the works completed in the reporting period;
- 2) if necessary, with regard to the activities established under the program, the deadline of which does not expire within the reporting period but certain steps have already been taken;
- 3) with regard to risks or issues (if any) that prevent or endanger successful implementation of an activity established under the program;
- 4) with regard to recommendations, if any, that can contribute to the implementation of the activities established under the program.

10. If necessary, the Coordinating Committee may request additional clarifications and more accurate information with regard to the semiannual reports submitted.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

11. At the end of each semi-annual period, the Coordinating Committee shall organize a public hearing on the progress of the activities established under the program.

12. Representatives from public authorities and local governments, public and communal non-governmental organizations, non-governmental and international organizations may be invited to take part in the public hearing on the initiative of the Coordinating Council.

13. At least 15 days prior to a public hearing, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia shall post an announcement on its website regarding the organization of the public hearing by stating its day, venue, time and agenda.

14. If non-governmental organizations wish to take part in the public hearing, they shall electronically apply for participation with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia by stating the name of the organization, contact details of the organization (email address and/or telephone number) and information on the participant (participants).

15. The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia shall provide by email to the preregistered non-governmental organizations documents (reports, surveys and analyses) regarding the agenda of the public hearing.

16. The participants of the public hearing shall:

1) hear the presentations and reports given by speakers;

2) share their positions and comments concerning the progress of the presented activity and submit proposals.

17. Subject-specific public hearings may be organized on the initiative of the Coordinating Council.

18. The Secretary of the Coordinating Council shall conduct the public hearing.

V. MINUTE TAKING AT SESSIONS OF THE COORDINATING COUNCIL AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

19. The minutes during the sessions of the Coordinating Council and public hearings shall be taken by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia. The minutes of the sessions shall be signed by the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman of the Coordinating Council, and the minutes of public hearings shall be signed by the Secretary of the Coordinating Council.

20. The minutes of sessions and public hearings shall include main provisions of matters discussed, reports presented, presentations made, opinions expressed and recommendations submitted. The minutes of sessions and public hearings shall be enclosed to the documentation appertaining to the matters discussed.

21. The minutes taken during the sessions of the Coordinating Council and public hearings shall be kept with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia.

**Republic of Armenia
HEAD-MINISTER OF STAFF OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA,**

D. Harutyunyan