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PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe presents its compliments to all Permanent Missions and Delegations to the OSCE and to the Conflict Prevention Center, and in accordance with Decision 2/09 of the Forum for Security Co-operation, has the honor to transmit herewith the reply to the Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Permanent Missions and Delegations to the OSCE and to the Conflict Prevention Center the assurances of its highest consideration. *AM*

Attachment: 14 pages.



Vienna 15 April 2021

All Permanent Missions and Delegations to the OSCE
OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre
VIENNA

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT
ON POLITICO-MILITARY ASPECTS OF SECURITY

Section I: Inter-State elements

1. Account of measures to prevent and combat terrorism.

1.1 To which agreements and arrangements (universal, regional, subregional and bilateral) related to preventing and combating terrorism is your State a party?

Armenia has acceded and is a State Party to the following international agreements on prevention of, and combating terrorism:

United Nations

1. Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board of Aircraft;
2. Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft;
3. Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation;
4. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents;
5. International Convention against the Taking of Hostages;
6. Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material;
7. Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation;
8. Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation;
9. Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf;
10. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Right of the Child on the Involvement of the Children in Armed Conflicts;
11. Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty;
12. Second Protocol of 1999 to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;
13. Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection;
14. International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings;
15. International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism;
16. International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism;
17. International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism Bombing;
18. Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries
19. The Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of Prisoners of War;
20. Additional Protocol relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts;
21. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

22. United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
23. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, supplementing UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
24. Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
25. Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, their parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
26. United Nations Convention against Corruption;
27. Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction;
28. Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction;
29. Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms;
30. Additional Protocol on Combating Terrorism to the Agreement among the Government of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Combating Crime, in Particular in its organized forms;
31. Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Protection of Civil Aviation from Illegal Interference;
32. Treaty on Cooperation among States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Combating Terrorism;
33. Agreement on the Cooperation between the Ministries of Interior of the CIS Participating States for the Suppression of Terrorism;
34. Proliferation Security Initiative.

Council of Europe, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization and CIS

1. European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism;
2. Protocol amending the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism;
3. European Convention on Extradition;
4. European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters;
5. European Convention on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters;
6. Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition;
7. Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition;
8. Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters;
9. Second Additional protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters;
10. Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons;
11. Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons;
12. Criminal Law Convention on Corruption;
13. Additional Protocol to the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption;

14. Civil Law Convention on Corruption;
15. Europol Convention;
16. Convention on Cyber Crime;
17. Additional Protocol concerning the Criminalization of Acts of a Racist and Xenophobic Nature Committed through Computer Systems;
18. European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes;
19. Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime;
20. Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure, Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and the Financing of Terrorism;
21. Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism; 22. Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

1.2 What national legislation has been adopted in your State to implement the above-mentioned agreements and arrangements?

1. Law of the Republic of Armenia on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism.
2. Law of the Republic of Armenia on Combating Terrorism.
3. Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia.
4. National Strategy of the Republic of Armenia for Combating Terrorism.
5. National Strategy for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing.

1.3. What are the roles and missions of military, paramilitary and security forces and the police in preventing and combating terrorism in your State?

The following agencies are directly engaged in the fight against terrorism:

- National Security Service;
- Police;
- Ministry of Defense.

Within the authorities prescribed by law they:

1. Develop and implement measures aimed at prevention, detection, suppression and mitigation of consequences of terrorist acts, as well as detection and elimination of causes and conditions leading to terrorism;
2. Establish specialized units to counter terrorism;
3. Take part in the preparation of treaties in the field of the fight against terrorism;
4. Develop proposals for improving relevant legislation and submit them to the Government for approval.

With a view to coordinating the antiterrorist activities of the responsible agencies the Prime Minister may establish, if necessary, an ad hoc body for carrying out counter-terrorist operation.

2. Stationing of Armed Forces on foreign territory

2.1 The Republic of Armenia does not have its Armed Forces permanently stationed on the territory of another participating State.

The deployment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia outside the territory of

the Republic of Armenia is authorized by the Government and carried out primarily in the framework of UN SC mandated operations.

a. Kosovo

On September 3, 2003, a Memorandum of Understanding concerning assignment of an Armenian Rifle Platoon under the Hellenic Armed Forces Contingent in Kosovo was signed between Armenia and Greece which was ratified by the Armenian Parliament on December 13, 2003. In January 2004, a platoon of Armenian peacekeeping battalion arrived in Kosovo to participate in KFOR peacekeeping operation.

In June 2008, the peacekeepers' number was doubled. Armenian "blue helmets" served within the Greek Army battalion.

In December 2011, the Armenian peacekeepers were withdrawn from Kosovo as the MoU between Armenia and Greece expired.

In July 2012, Armenian contingent (initially – 32, currently - 40 peacekeepers) was redeployed in Kosovo, according to the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the US European Command, and was stationed at “CAMP BONDSTEEL” U.S. base, Battle Group EAST.

b. Afghanistan

Since 2010 Armenian contingent has been involved in the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and since January 2015, in the NATO Resolute Support Mission (under German command).

c. Lebanon

Since February 2012 Armenia has been sending one Military Observer to Lebanon in the framework of UN UNIFIL mission.

Since November 26, 2014, an Armenian peacekeeping platoon of 32 members and 1 observer has been involved in the UNIFIL Mission under the Italian Command. Relevant MOU with Italy was signed on 3rd of June, 2014 in Brussels, Belgium.

d. Mali

Since June, 2015, one representative of Armenian Armed Forces has been deployed in UN MINUSMA mission in Mali to serve as logistic staff officer (permanent location: UN forces HQ in Bamako).

3. Implementation of other international commitments related to the Code of Conduct

Armenia is committed to the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Armenia exchanges information on the Armed Forces of Armenia, their structure, areas of deployment and the Treaty limited equipment, as well as receives inspections. The inspection reports clearly state that Armenia is fully implementing the Treaty.

Armenia remains committed to the implementation of the Vienna Document 2011 and other confidence- and security-building measures which are the primary means to promote military stability and transparency. Armenia receives inspections and evaluation visits, exchanges relevant annual information and voluntary notification of one military exercise below threshold, in line with the VD+ Decision 9/12. The Armenian side actively contributed to the updating of the Vienna Document through supporting most of the suggestions on its modernization some of which were adopted as the FSC Decisions and later incorporated into the Vienna Document 2011. Armenia advocates full and unreserved implementation of the Vienna Document with the understanding that compliance to the VD reduces risk of use of force and promotes trust and confidence.

Armenia is implementing other OSCE Confidence and Security Building Measures, i.e. Annual Exchange on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), Global Exchange of Military

Information (GEMI), as well as Information Exchange on Conventional Arms Transfers, Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Landmines, etc.

It is also worth to mention the positive role of the OSCE Communication Network as an important instrument for facilitating the implementation of various commitments under the VD2011 and the CFE Treaty.

Armenia also provides relevant information to the United Nations, such as:

- Report on the National Legislation on Transfer of Arms, Military Equipment and Dual-Use Goods and Technology;
- National report on Conventional Arms transfers;
- Report on Confidence building measures in the regional and sub-regional context;
- Report on Conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Section II: Intra-State elements

1. National Planning and Decision-Making Process.

1.1 What is the national planning and decision-making process in determining/approving military posture and defense expenditures in your State?

National planning and decision-making process for the determination of the military posture of the Republic of Armenia is regulated in accordance with the Constitution and legislation of the Republic of Armenia.

Particularly, the Strategic Defense Review (SDR) process was conducted from 2008 to 2011, resulting in the identification of the force structure and tasks of Armenian Armed Forces till 2015. Based on this, Armed Forces Development Plan was endorsed and put into action, envisaging the tasks of each component of the forces and their mid-term development vision.

Launched on 13 December 2013, the second iteration of SDR was concluded by December 2015. It resulted in the development of long-term development plans and programs of the defense sector from 2016 through 2020 (namely, the Armed Forces Development Plan, and Armaments and Military Equipment Development State Program). SDR resulted in development of insights into the process of Armenian Defence Sector and Armed Forces transformation towards better meeting contemporary security challenges and the ability to deter, counter, and neutralize current and potential threats. Based on the outcomes of SDR, the transformation efforts were carried out in areas of doctrine (methods, tactics, techniques and procedures of warfare), defense (strategic) planning, military education, human resources management, and command and control (with introduction of Mission Command as the overarching philosophy of C2). Defense Planning is carried out based on Mid-term expenditure program (3 years) submitted to the Government (through Ministry of Finance). Annual Defense Budget as an integral part of State Budget of the Republic of Armenia is submitted by the Government to National Assembly (Parliament) as the Draft Law on State Budget of the Republic of Armenia (on annual basis, for each fiscal year).

Based on constitutional amendments of 2015, new Law on Defence was adopted on 29 November 2017 and came into effect on 9 April, 2018. It establishes main definitions pertinent to defence sector, principles of organizing and implementing defence of Armenia, roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders in defence.

Current Law on Defence also for the first time institutionalized Strategic Defence Planning process, and defines it as “comprehensive, hierarchical, long-term and continuous process aimed at planning and development of capabilities and organizations of military security system”. The Strategic Defence Review, as an integral component of defence planning, was also institutionalized

for the first time in that piece of legislation, which defines SDR as “setting of goals and objectives for strategic defence planning based on comprehensive evaluation of current and possible military threats to security environment, and resources and opportunities available for neutralization of those threats”. Law on Defence also envisages periodic development of Armed Forces long term development programs (plans).

Change of Government that took place in May 2018 resulted in no alterations in major tenets of Armenian security and defence policy and strategy, and this is reflected in Government’s Program for 2018-2023 (later, after snap Parliamentary Elections on 6 December 2018, replaced by Program for 2019-2023). New Government is planning to adopt new National Security Strategy that is being elaborated under the supervision of National Security Council and is developed in parallel with the conduct of new iteration of SDR. New iteration of SDR commenced in March 2020 and will result in updated Armed Forces development plan, and well as (possibly) elaboration of National Defence (or military) strategy.

Main tenets of the Defence policy were elaborated in Government’s Program mentioned above, the Ministerial Vision for implementation of Defence portion of that program, as well as in long-term development plans for Armed Forces and Defence Sector (Armed Forces Development Plan for 2019-2024).

“Armed Forces Development Plan for 2019-2024”, as the current top-level guidance, covers upgrade of C2 system, readiness and training, HRM and military education, military science, logistics (sustainment), financial and budgeting system, military industry, military infrastructures, international cooperation, and integrity building. The “State Program of Armaments and Military Equipment for 2018-2024” underpins the AF Development Plan in equipment-terms, and envisages maintenance and modernisation of current inventory, as well as acquisition of new capabilities.

The third iteration of SDR was launched on March 2020. In September due to war in Nagorno Karabakh the process was temporarily suspended.

2. Existing Structures and Processes.

On 6 December 2015, a Referendum on Constitutional Reforms was held in Armenia. The new Constitution put into effect transition, once the two-year transitional phase (till 2018) was over, from semi-presidential to parliamentary form of governance.

Constitutional reforms further enhanced civil and democratic control over Defense Sector and Armed Forces through increased roles of National Assembly and Government in defence matters. Armenian Armed Forces have been and will continue to be under strict civil and democratic control.

Democratic control of Armed Forces is ensured through Parliament’s passage of all the legislation pertinent to defence sector, regular hearings on defence-related issues in Parliament, participation of parliamentarians in various commissions and/or task forces dealing with defence matters, and, making defence appropriations within yearly approval of state budget.

Commander in Chief in the war time is the Prime Minister. There is no Commander in Chief in peace time though, and this function is collectively vested on Government (Cabinet of Ministers), which is responsible for implementation of defence policy, making decisions on mobilization and employment of Armed Forces (the decision to declare war is made by Parliament).

The National Security Council sets main directions of defence policy, and adopts development, mobilization, deployment, and employment plans of Armed Forces. Minister of Defence exercises command and control of MoD and Armed Forces in line with established directions of defence policy, and ensures civilian control over the military. The direct commander of the Armed Forces is Chief of the General Staff, who reports to the Minister of Defence at peace time and to Commander in Chief at war time.

Harmonization of legislation in the defense sphere with constitutional amendments completed in November 2017 with the adoption of the following two capstone legislations - “Law on Defense” and “Law on Military Service and the Status of Military Serviceman”.

In order to further enhance the civil and democratic control over the military a range of steps were undertaken by the Ministry of Defence. Particularly, by a Decree of the Prime Minister of 25 July 2019 on Approving of the Charter of the Ministry of Defence a new structural unit of the MoD “Military Inspection Service” was established, which operationally independent from the military hierarchy and is in charge of conducting inspection of combat readiness of the Military Units and reporting directly to the Minister. The Service is headed by the second in rank highest military officer of the AF, hence ensuring civil control over the Military via the Military.

In parallel to this the status of another control mechanism in the MoD “Human Rights and Integrity Building Center”, which is in charge of supervision of state of Human Rights in the AF, was improved as a Structural unit of the MoD by the abovementioned Decree of the Prime Minister.

In addition to this the recruitment and call-up system has been reformed in 2019. The Military Commissariat, which was acting under command of the Chief of the General Staff, was restructured into Conscripts and Mobilization Service and became a Structural unit of the MoD. The Head of the Service is directly subordinated to the Minister of Defence. The regional Commissariats have been optimized and turned into Regional offices of the Conscripts and Mobilization Service.

Within the framework of the OSCE Armenia Cooperation Programme project on Strengthening the Security Sector Governance in Armenia a National Platform for Democratic Oversight of Security Sector was established on 27 February 2020. Being a part of the Parliamentary oversight of the security sector, the platform will serve as an advisory body to the National Assembly Standing Committee on Defence and National Security. The main objectives of the Platform are:

1. Raising public awareness, fostering acceptance of democratic oversight concepts, principles and mechanisms as well as facilitating dialogue between security sector institutions, external oversight bodies and the civil society.
2. Contributing to development and implementation of national policy on democratic oversight of security sector in an inclusive and evidence-based manner.
3. Strengthening capacities of all actors involved in the platform in carrying out effective oversight of the security sector.

2.3 What are the roles and missions of military, paramilitary and security forces, and how does your State control that such forces act solely within the constitutional framework?

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia the mission of Armed Forces is to ensure security, safety, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of the Republic of Armenia. Other roles of Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia, as provided by the Law on Defense, are

- protection of fundamental values of national security;
- prevention and neutralization of possible military offensive against the Republic of Armenia;
- participation in the prevention of emergency situations, the reduction and elimination of consequences of possible crises, as well as in civil defense activities such as evacuation, search and rescue and humanitarian activities;
- detection of military threats and their management;
- fulfillment of international obligations, including participation in international humanitarian, rescue, peacekeeping operations;

- participation in the prevention and neutralization of subversive activities and terrorist acts, etc.

3. Procedures related to different forces personnel

3.1 What kind of procedures for recruitment and call-up of personnel for service in your military, paramilitary and internal security forces does your State have?

A person is recruited into the Military service by:

- Conscription (each citizen of Armenia who has reached the age of 18 years and is eligible to serve in the manner prescribed by the law on Military Duty shall serve 2 years in the national Armed Forces. The call-up of personnel takes place twice a year. For each call-up the Cabinet of Ministers adopts a Resolution,
- Contract mandatory service, when instead of serving 2 years, conscripts sign up for 3 years to serve in units conducting combat duty at the border, and upon completion of the tour of duty receive a lump sum of payment,
- Contract mandatory service for Students of Higher Education Establishments of Armenia who sign a contract with the MoD to pass a Military Course at the Military University and upon graduation to serve as an Officer in the Armed Forces for at least 2 years,
- Contract service for citizens who wish and are eligible to serve in the Armed Forces for at least 3 years.

All four types of services are regulated by “Law on Military Service and the Status of Military Serviceman” of November 15, 2017, as well as by appropriate Government Decisions.

A person is recruited for Service in Security Forces in accordance with the Law on “Service in National Security bodies” of 11 April, 2003 lastly amended on 21 January 2020.

3.2 What kind of exemptions or alternatives to military service does your State have?

Exemption from compulsory military service is prescribed by the Law on Military Service and the Status of Military Serviceman.

In 2003 the Law on Alternative Service was adopted which entered into force on 1 July, 2004 and lastly amended on 21 June, 2018.

The Law on Alternative Service defines the procedure of replacing compulsory military service of citizens of the Republic of Armenia with alternative service, performing alternative service, demobilizing into the reserves, and registering.

A conscript citizen shall have the right to assume an alternative service, if carrying out a compulsory military service in military units, as well as carrying, keeping, maintaining and using arms contradict his religion or convictions.

Section II

3. Procedures related to different forces personnel

3.3. What are the legal and administrative procedures to protect the rights of all forces personnel as well as conscripts.

The Ministry of Defence, based on a positive obligation of a state to guarantee second-generation rights, continues its efforts to ensure the proper realization of social and economic rights, social welfare, and access to medical treatment for the Armed Forces personnel, enshrined in national legislation. The framework of social benefits for service personnel is defined by the “Law on Military Service and the Status of Military Servicemen” and includes housing, allowances, pensions, education, full healthcare programs. Families of the Armed Forces personnel have access to a range

of support services, such as education and free medical service. In general, the social protection system for the military can be divided into **social insurance** and **social protection**. As for social insurance, there is a specific policy in case of injuries or death on duty. According to the RA Law “On Compensation for the Damage Caused to the Life or Health of Servicepersons in the Defence of the Republic of Armenia”, the Servicemen Insurance Foundation (SIF) provides compensation to each serviceperson classified as 1st and 2nd group disabled as a result of combat duty or military operations. Family members (parents, spouses, and children) of servicepersons, that have been killed or declared missing during combat duty or military operations, are also entitled to financial compensation from the SIF. All the servicepersons that have the 3rd group of disability receive military pensions and other social benefits.

Within the Ministry of Defence, the responsibility for developing and implementing MoD’s policy in the fields of social and health protection of service personnel and their families is carried by the General Department of the Servicemen Health, Social Protection and Veterans Affairs. It was established in 2019 on the basis of the Servicemen Social Protection Department.

Some of the main tasks of the General Department are the following:

- to devise and implement the MoD’s policy in the area of social protection as well as to monitor the measures that are realized in its framework,
- to ensure measures to increase the level of access to the information concerning guarantees and benefits that are defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia.

To raise awareness about the newly adopted legislative acts,

- to protect the social, medical and legal interests of servicepersons and their families. To implement measures aimed at constant improvement of their life conditions,
- to devise target programs aimed at improving healthcare service for the military, preventive medicine, treatment as well as ensuring decrease of disability level. To set control over the programs’ implementation and realization,
- to create and implement target programs aimed at veterans’ integration into social life, their rehabilitation, mental and physical health support.

The MoD cooperates with international organizations (UNDP, UNFPA, the Council of Europe, ICRC), local NGOs, social initiatives to enhance the quality of social and healthcare services provided to servicepersons, their families, and veterans.

There is a complex system of legislative guarantees as well as internal and external mechanisms to ensure and protect the rights of the Armed Forces personnel, including conscripts. Besides common guarantees provided by the Constitution and other legislative acts of the Republic of Armenia, the rights and obligations of all forces’ personnel are defined by specific laws and regulations of Armenian Armed Forces which also provide the mechanism dealing of complaints. Disciplinary Code clearly defines the disciplinary offences and punishments of disciplinary character for each offence separately.

There are also external and alternative mechanisms of protection of the rights of all forces personnel, such as judicial protection or complaints addressed to Human Rights Defender of Armenia, as well as Public Council under the Minister of Defense, which consists of representatives of local NGOs and deals with human rights violations complaints, particularly during the call-up process. Moreover, for a better promotion of the new policy of civilian democratic control of the armed forces generally, and “citizen in uniform” concept specifically, in 2015 Human Rights and Integrity Building Center was established which is under the direct supervision of the Minister of Defense, and is operationally independent from the military hierarchy. It is a multitask Center, considered to be an internal oversight mechanism, and aimed at effective coordination of human rights protection in the army, human rights awareness-raising, developing of anti-corruption policy, ethics. Good cooperation

was established between the Centre and Human Rights Defender's Criminal Justice and Military Personnel Rights Protection Department to ensure adequate protection for the enjoyment of the rights of the servicepersons and their families.

The Centre, among the others, is tasked to:

- coordinate and combine the process of promoting human rights and integrity in different subdivisions of the Ministry of Defence and those of the General Staff of Armed Forces;
- establish proper control over the fulfillment of obligations in the sphere of promoting human rights and integrity;
- introduce new management methods based on respect for human rights as part of a commitment to democratic values;
- initiate, organize, implement, monitor and assess programs related to the defense needs of the Republic of Armenia, as well as to the promotion of human rights and integrity within the framework of cooperation with international partners;
- conduct comprehensive studies (research) of the current situation of the human rights promotion and protection in the defense sphere and develop recommendations in that respect;
- provide recommendations, practical and methodological instructions to the subdivisions on topics of promotion of human rights and integrity in the defense sphere, as well as develop corresponding action plans, if needed, and monitor their implementation;
- organize unannounced visits to subdivisions and military units for operative assessment of the state of promoting human rights and integrity in the defense sphere or studying specific target issues;
- organize joint conferences, discussions, courses, and other events with international partners, academic and educational institutions and non-governmental organizations; provide support in systematic review and improvement of concept papers, curricula, regulatory legal acts related to the defense sphere.

Since 2017, the creation of the MoD Hotline has become another mechanism to voice about the human rights violations, which is very important not only as an effective way to initiate action against such manifestations but also as a preventive factor, as the experience shows that servicepersons becoming aware of their rights and responsibilities through the hotline are more likely to defend their rights through legal instruments.

Apart from these mechanisms, the "Human rights in the Armed Forces" curriculum was developed and inserted into the existing educational program of the Military Universities of the MoD. The course materials are placed on the official website of the MoD.

In order to strengthen human rights protection in the Armed Forces, the MoD is cooperating with the range of international organizations, NGOs, human rights activists, Mass Media, etc.

Following the completion of the Council of Europe national "Strengthening the Application of European Human Rights Standards in the Armed Forces in Armenia" a three-year project the new "Human rights and Women in the Armed Forces in Armenia" has been launched on July 2019. This project is implemented by the Council of Europe within the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022 and funded by the United Kingdom. It is tailored to the needs of the Armed Forces and aimed to support the MoD in its efforts to enhance human rights protection in the armed forces and guarantee equal service conditions for all servicepersons.

Since 2014, the MoD has cooperated with the UNFPA Armenia Country Office to ensure protection of women's rights and equal opportunities in the defense sector. It is aimed at ensuring

implementation UNSCR 1325 provisions at the national level as pertaining to defence sector. In 2020, the main objectives of the cooperation were the following:

- Promoting the participation of women in policy development and decision-making processes within the defence system.
- Promoting initiatives targeting the inclusion of women in various subdivisions of the armed forces while paying special attention to the involvement of the women in subdivisions that take part in peacekeeping missions.
- Developing the culture of protection of women's rights and ensuring equal opportunities within the defence sector and introducing the monitoring mechanisms for its protection.

Since 2018, as a result of gender mainstreaming into the policies of the Armed Forces of Armenia, two female peacekeepers have been successfully carrying out its mission in Kosovo. Moreover, in 2019 two Armenian female peacekeepers were deployed to UNIFIL mission in Lebanon and another two to Resolute Support missions in Afghanistan.

The OSCE Office in Yerevan was another important partner of the Ministry of Defense in promoting security sector reform and democratic control of Armed Forces. Following the closure of the OSCE Office in Yerevan in 2017 against the will of the Government of Armenia, the latter and the OSCE agreed in 2018 on the establishment of the "Armenia Co-operation Programme". The Austrian Federal Ministry of Defence is one of the cooperation partners in the overall OSCE-project, its commitment focuses on supporting the Armenian Human Rights and Building Integrity Centre Hotline (Hotline Service). Based on the Armenia Cooperation Programme, an exploratory visit by a delegation of the Austrian MoD to the Human Rights and Building Integrity Centre (HRBIC) of the Armenian MoD took place on November 2019. The main purposes of the visit were to get familiarized with the technical and research capabilities of the MoD HRBIC Hotline, as well as to assess the training needs of the hotline operators through conducting an initial workshop & discussions. Based on the identified needs a tailored program for the HRBIC will be designed covering the areas of "Research and Methodology" and "Education and Training of Operators", which will take place in May 2021.

Generally, the new course of defense policy taken by Armenian authorities is mostly concentrated on furthering the acknowledgment and entitlement of all members of armed forces to the same rights as other individuals (subject to certain restrictions inherent to military life) in conformity with the jurisprudence of the Court and international human rights law; consideration of respect of human rights not merely as a legal obligation of the State, but also as an obligation to create a professional culture within the military that includes respect for human rights as part of a commitment to democratic values; establishment of trustworthy relations between soldiers and their commanders, fostering a positive image of armed forces in society; increase of civilian democratic control of armed forces, and more operational control of human rights protection in the army; elimination of the torture and ill-treatment in the armed forces.

Section III

1. Public access

1.1. How does your State ensure public access to information related to your State's armed forces?

During 2020, the Hotline has received and responded more than 161 293 calls mainly from the servicepersons and their family member related to various defense areas¹. The hotline was created

1. Because of the war against Artsakh, from September 27 to December 1 2020, the Hotline operated in 24-hours mode.

in 2017 as the first whistleblower submission platform. It is an accessible tool for all citizens to directly express their concerns, complaints, and grievances in the defense field, which are reported to the Minister of Defense. Informers are protected by the RA Law on Whistleblowing System. The Hotline is also an institutional oversight mechanism as it gave the MoD leadership a unique opportunity to learn more about the illegal, unethical or incorrect activity within the whole structure.

Hotline's informational mission should not be ignored as well. Most of the calls refer to informational questions when the public seeks legal counseling. This increases public awareness of the ongoing reforms and programs in the defense sector.

Taking into account the number of calls, two telephone of the Hotline and one landline number were added. The staff of the center not only carried out a night shift, but also at the checkpoint received family members of missing or dead servicemen, if possible, answered the questions they raised, and if necessary sent letters to the relevant units.

Also the Center is involved in the interdepartmental working group on the clarification and collection of data of unknown servicemen and other persons who were captured during the hostilities, formed by order of the Minister of Defense, as well as in the European Court of Human Rights, formed to facilitate the drafting of an interstate complaint against Azerbaijan on behalf of the Republic of Armenia.

The mission is to provide a responsive national hotline for the Armenian citizens where the public can report any suspected illicit behavior, get legal counseling or be informed of the current state of the conscripts. The Center works in conjunction with:

- The Office of the Prime Minister,
- Departments, divisions, military units and commissariats under the jurisdiction of the MoD and the Armed Forces;
- Law enforcement agencies including police, military police, prosecutor's office, Investigation Committee, etc;
- Other ministries and state agencies (MLSA, MFA, MOH, MOJ, etc.);
- The RA Human Rights Defender's Office;
- NGO's, Mass media.

Problems received through these channels concerning the powers of the Ministry of Defense are transmitted to the center in a working order, after which the center's employees try to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

4. Implementation of other political norms, principles, decisions and International Humanitarian Law.

4.1 How does your State ensure that International Humanitarian Law and Law of War are made widely available, e.g., through military training programs and regulations?

The International Humanitarian Law as a separate discipline is incorporated into academic curricula of military institutes of Armenia. Besides above mentioned, short term trainings for the military personnel of the Armed Forces of Armenia on IHL and LOAC are provided by the ICRC on regular basis. Personnel of Peacekeeping Brigade are permanent attendees on this type of trainings.

Human Rights education and training initiatives have been activated and concrete steps have been undertaken in Armenian Armed Forces since 2010. These efforts have been supported by the OSCE Office in Yerevan, by other IGO's (UNFPA, ICRC4, UNICEF etc.), as well as civil society organizations and academic circles. In 2012 "The Handbook on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Armed Forces Personnel", developed by OSCE/ODIHR and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) was translated into Armenian and local experts

wrote the teaching manual. Since 2012 each year Human Rights courses have been organized for the military, taught by well-known local NGO experts and academicians from Human Rights sphere. The specialized courses have been designed and delivered differently, based on needs and frame of responsibilities of target audience (such as Military Police, Peacekeepers, Military Academies, Vice-commanders on personnel affairs etc.).

Special attention has been given to preparation of own military staff capable to deliver Human Rights courses in military academies and run trainings for personnel. Thus, several small-range pilot courses with the elements of TOT (Training of trainers) were organized from 2012 to 2013 in Military Academies.

For 2020 the same format of Human Rights trainings in the Armed Forces is already fixed and planned.

4.4 What has been done to provide for the individual service member's exercise of his or her civil rights and how does your State ensure that the country's Armed Forces are politically neutral?

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia the Armed Forces are politically neutral and under civilian control.

4.5 How does your State ensure that its defense policy and doctrine are consistent with international law?

The National Security Strategy, Military Doctrine and other documents on defense policy pass intergovernmental procedures of approval to ensure their compliance with international commitments of the Republic of Armenia. Moreover, certain parts of these documents are consulted with international experts.

Section III: Public access and contact information

1.3 How does your State ensure public access to information related to your State's Armed Forces?

Public access to information related to the Armed Forces is open and available to public through:

- Information Department of the Ministry of Defense (MoD),
- "Armenian Army", military-scientific quarterly published by MoD,
- "Armed Forces", television program,
- "Armenian Soldier" weekly,
- Press conferences in the MoD,
- Regular "open doors" events in military units,
- MoD "Hot Line".

In 2019 the Hotline has received and responded more than 46 000 calls mainly from the servicepersons and their family member related to various defence areas. The Hotline was created in 2017 as the first whistleblower submission platform. It is an accessible tool for all citizens to directly express their concerns, complaints, and grievances in the defence field, which are reported to the Minister of Defense. Informers are protected by the RA Law on Whistleblowing System. The Hotline is also an institutional oversight mechanism as it gave the MoD leadership a unique opportunity to learn more about the illegal, unethical or incorrect activities within the whole structure.

Hotline's informational mission should not be ignored as well. Most of the calls refer to informational questions when the public seeks legal counseling. This increases public awareness of the ongoing reforms and programs in the defence sector. The mission is to provide a responsive

national Hotline for the Armenian citizens where the public can report any suspected illicit behavior, get legal counseling or be informed of the current state of the conscripts. The hotline works in conjunction with:

- Departments, divisions, military units and commissariats under the jurisdiction of the MoD and the Armed Forces;
- Law enforcement agencies including Police, Military Police, Prosecutor's Office, Investigation Committee, etc.;
- Other Ministries and State Agencies (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, etc.);
- Human Rights Defender's Office;
- NGO's, Mass Media.

2. Contact information

2.1 Provide information on the national point of contact for the implementation of the Code of Conduct.

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