

Appeal of Armenian Committee of Helsinki Citizens Assembly

We are appealing to all International and Inter Governmental Organizations, to all fair-minded people who appreciate the ideals of freedom and democracy.

We consider our duty to bring to the entire world the shock and profound indignation of the population of Armenia – people from very different social circles and with very different views: in the time of peace Armenian authorities has shot down peaceful demonstration.

In the morning of 1st of March, on the Freedom Square in Yerevan, by the order of authorities, without warning, Armenian special forces attacked sleeping under tents demonstrates – supporters of the opposition, and dispersed them with the use of truncheons and electric shockers.

At the same day, in the evening, a spontaneous demonstration caused by the morning assault and battery was shot down. After that a State of Emergency was declared and mass arrests of opposition members and their supporters started. Today the general number of detained is 220, 110 persons are arrested. Intimidation, blackmailing and persecution of family members have reached an unprecedented scale. Bodies of killed are not given to relatives and are still kept in Hospitals in order to conceal the real causes of death.

Persecuted families are in worry for the life of their dears. We, while sharing their concerns, do not have possibility to check the condition of arrested persons. Many families are hiding their children, are sending them out of Armenia.

World community must be informed about all this. In all countries, where exists Armenian Diaspora, demonstrations of many thousands against the actions of Armenian authorities are taking place.

Developed situation is fraught with the outburst of discord and civic rebellion caused by rigged elections, unjust decision of the Constitutional Court, violence against people, repressions, heightening of intimidation.

Situation with the human rights, civil freedoms in Armenia during the electoral campaign and especially on Elections day was so hugely unprecedented and challenging that can not fit in any formula.

Before the elections and on the day of elections all subordinates were executing the order of authorities – to impede Mr. Levon Ter-Petrosyan by all means, in every possible way. Beating of proxies and local observers, bribing of voters, ballot-box stuffing and many other flagrant violations – all these is reflected in the second interim report of the OSCE.

We would like also to underline, that our organization jointly with a number of other NGOs was implementing “Legal initiative – Elections 2008” project and on the day of elections through the “hot line” and through the teams of rapid legal advise has received plenty complaints on deliberate violations.

All above-mentioned brings our country down, in line with nasty tyrannies. The congratulations to the “President elect”, coming from Heads of Democratic States stirs up our perplexity and convinces us in the fact that sometimes even the leaders of very developed countries don't want any “extra headaches”.

Armenian Authorities, which easily stepped over the crime committed by themselves, hypocritically are deliberating about their readiness for dialogue with the opposition, but all their real doings are excluding any possibility for such dialogue. The authorities that have the role of garantiing security of their citizens and state , presently represent danger for our society .

We are insisently requesting Mr. Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common and Security Policy, to engage deeply and without delay in the situation in Armenia. Because if European Structures do not give their strongest evaluation of the passed events - it will appear as a support to the repressive regime, which will be strengthened after such “approval” from credible International Organizations and Institutions. It would be a very bad message not only for Armenia, but for the entire South-Caucasus Region and will provoke a wave of deep frustration.

We also request when discussing this issue to invite the representatives of the Armenian opposition and NGOs – known as providers of democracy.

The situation in Armenia remains very tense.

Ms. Anahit Bayandur, Recipient of The Olof Palme Memorial Fund for Peace,
Dr. Natalya Martirosyan , Co – Chairs of Armenian Committee of HCA
all members of the Committee, including regional groups.

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