

**Jean-Claude Juncker**, President of the European Commission

**Federica Mogherini**, Vice-President of the European Commission, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

**Donald Tusk**, President, European Council

23 April 2018

**Letter by the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum  
on the Situation in Armenia**

The Steering Commission of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum wishes to express its gratitude for your recent statement and other statements from the EU made today and yesterday in light of the critical situation in Yerevan and other Armenian regions.

We want to add our voice to your appeal and that of the EU for restraint and the search for an agreement between the authorities and the opposition.

We appreciate that your statement of congratulations to Armenia's new Prime Minister speaks of importance of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Cooperation Agreement (CEPA), which, as you say, is designed to further consolidate democracy, the rule of law and to protect human rights. We would add that implementation of the Agreement should be conducted under strong political conditionality and monitored closely by civil society.

You say that you trust the Republic of Armenia authorities "will do everything to respect the rights of citizens to exercise their freedom of assembly in a peaceful manner and in accordance with the law". However, the events in Yerevan on 22 April with the arrests of the leaders of the recent big protests including members of the Parliament who have immunity and other leaders of the protests suggest that, for the moment, your trust is ill-grounded. This impression is strengthened by the Armenian Prime Minister's veiled threat that force will be used against the demonstrators.

The Steering Committee has already called for the release of those arrested and detained. We have also called for an agreement between the authorities and the protesters on an early free and fair election that would install a government enjoying the democratic legitimacy needed to implement the CEPA. In these circumstances, we respectfully suggest that the EU suspend the implementation of the CEPA until such time as the political conditions come about which would allow the agreement to be implemented in good faith.

Yours sincerely,

***Member of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum***