



Building a Common Secure and Democratic Future

28-29 November 2016
Brussels

Resolution No.9/AA/2016 (draft Resolution No.12/AA/2016) November 29, 2016, Brussels

Resolution of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on Prisoners of Conscience in Armenia (July 2016)

Recalling the unprecedented mass violations of human rights in Armenia in July 2016;

Relying on the results of the Monitoring Mission on human right violations in Armenia conducted by the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum;

Following closely the investigation of July 2016 events and the increasing public doubt towards the investigation's effectiveness;

Regretting the lack of progress with regard to the State's intention to hold the law enforcement officers accountable for their actions and moreover, criminally charging only the participants of peaceful assemblies;

Expressing concern for the widespread practice by the courts and law enforcement agencies of pressurising, engaging in violence against, and wrongly prosecuting citizens.

Being perplexed by the fact that the Republic of Armenia Prosecutor's Office is joining the criminal cases against the participants of peaceful assemblies to the criminal case instituted against the armed group that occupied the Police regiment,

The EaP CSF remains convinced that human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential values, and that in the case of any unlawful intervention or infringement of these values, it is the responsibility of the state authorities to conduct an effective and comprehensive investigation. The state authorities should not tolerate human rights violations and should prevent the strengthening of a culture/climate of impunity and the erosion of democratic values in society.

The EaP CSF reiterates that people detained and criminally charged for participation in peaceful assemblies or for exercising their right to freedom of expression and thought are prisoners of conscience. Similar incidents in the country clearly demonstrate that repressions are occurring and that the state authorities are deviating from the principles of democracy.

The EaP CSF calls on the authorities of the Republic of Armenia to:

- **Release** all prisoners detained while exercising their right to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression immediately and unconditionally;
- **Hold accountable** the law enforcement officers and all other state officials for the brutal and mass violations of human rights during the events of July 2016;



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- ***Ensure*** that the principles of the right to a fair trial are unconditionally applied to all persons facing criminal charges for the events of July 2016.

The EaP CSF calls on the European Union, the Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations to:

- ***Demand*** the release of all prisoners of conscience as a precondition for the establishment and further development of relations with the Republic of Armenia;
- ***Ensure*** consistency in taking tangible and meaningful measures towards human rights protection;
- ***Insist on*** the necessity to establish practical mechanisms for the operation of principles of transparency and accountability in the sphere of the judiciary as a main component of the cooperation agenda;
- ***Establish*** effective guarantees for the right to freedom of speech and for the full manifestation of pluralism.