



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **The Coalition for Protection of Human Rights Has Been Established**

On 17 October, the founding assembly of the Coalition for Protection of Human Rights took place. During the meeting, the rules and regulations were discussed and approved, the governing board was elected and the avenues of the coalition's development were discussed.

The Coalition for Protection of Human Rights was founded in the scope of the "Human Rights: Monitoring and Publicity" project. It is implemented in the scope of a grant allocated by the "Commitment to Constructive Dialogue" project funded by the European Union.

During the founding assembly of the coalition, Zhanna Alexanyan, the President of the "Journalists for Human Rights" NGO, noted that each organisation involved in the coalition was well-known in its field and had great reputation.

After the coalition comprising 10 civil society organisations had been founded and its rules and regulations had been approved, the governing board was elected. It consists of 9 NGO representatives. In the future, it is expected that other non-governmental organisations working in the sector will join the coalition.

The Coalition for Protection of Human Rights will implement projects aimed at human rights protection and prevention of violations.

Zhanna Alexanyan noted that in the scope of the "Human Rights: Monitoring and Publicity" project the coalition had a goal to contribute to human rights protection in three directions: diminishing threats against human rights defenders, protection of rights of persons with disabilities, protection of rights of persons in closed institutions, that is, military servicemen and prisoners, and torture prevention.

Even though only 4 months have passed since the launch of the project, it has already had success. For instance, as regards the third component of the project, Zhanna Alexanyan noted that they had raised the issue of a person's sentence being issued due to a self-confession testimony which had been extracted from that person with violence. Based on this, criminal case was initiated.

The coalition members got familiar with the work already carried out and discussed questions on the meetings and work to follow.

The founding members of the Coalition for Protection of Human Rights are the following NGOs: "Journalists for Human Rights" NGO, "Power of Law" NGO, "Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities" NGO, "Association of Free Journalists" NGO, "Free Citizen" NGO, "Journalists for the Future" NGO, "Citizen-Taxpayer Business" NGO, "Community Mobilisation and Support Centre" NGO, "International Community of Human Rights" NGO, "Centre of Economic Rights" NGO.



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The European Commission is the EU's executive body. The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

The “*Commitment to Constructive Dialogue*” project is implemented with the financial support of the European Union by a Consortium of civil society organisations, which are the Armenian Lawyers’ Association (lead organisation), Agora Central Europe (NGO based in the Czech Republic), the Armenian Centre for Democratic Education-CIVITAS, the International Centre for Human Development, the SME Cooperation Association and the Union of Communities of Armenia.

The project aims to enhance the influence of civil society organisations (CSOs) and CSO coalitions/networks on public policies in Armenia. This will allow organisations that are already working in sectoral coalitions to access additional resources, new groups of civil society experts to come together and encourage place their causes on the local and national policy agenda, to identify common concerns and priorities and approach government bodies with constructive and strategic policy engagement initiatives.

The project will provide sub-grants to CSOs and CSO coalitions for developing public policies and bringing significant changes in the 9 target sectors selected within the project, including those of justice, education and business.

The **Armenian Lawyers’ Association** (ALA) was established in 1995 with a mission to promote to the establishment of the rule of law, democracy and formation of the civil society in Armenia, where the people are aware of their rights and where their rights are protected. Before February 2016, ALA used to be called Armenian Young Lawyers Association.

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