



PRESS RELEASE

19 December, 2018

Yerevan

The Draft Anti-Corruption Strategy was discussed with CSOs for the First Time

An event dedicated to the International Anti-Corruption Day was held in the framework of the EU-funded “Commitment to Constructive Dialogue” Project on 19 December. The RA Anti-Corruption Strategy 2019-2022 was discussed during the first part of the event.

In his welcoming speech, Deputy Minister of Justice **Suren Krmoyan** noted that this is an exceptional case, when the draft strategy is first discussed with civil society organisations.

“Today’s event is unprecedented due to the fact that this strategy is primarily presented for the opinion with the civil society. Simultaneously it has been sent to all state bodies. This means that the role of the civil society and the development of participatory policies in the anti-corruption sphere are highly appreciated,” Suren Krmoyan said.

President of the Armenian Lawyers’ Association, Coordinator of Secretariat of the CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition **Karen Zadoyan** said that they had applied to the government with a request to postpone the adoption of the strategy for a few months so that CSOs could participate in its development.

"If the Government decides to postpone the adoption of the strategy, we will have the opportunity to make the new anti-corruption strategy more legitimate and professional document. It will be a breakthrough document that will bring real changes to the lives of people. I welcome the Government’s approach that the document is based on 3 basic pillars of anti-corruption fight: anti-corruption education, prevention of corruption and inevitability of punishment,” he said.

The 3rd Conference of the Armenian CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition was held in the second part of the event.

In his speech the Chairman of the Armenian CSOs’ Anti-Corruption Coalition Governing Board, President of the International Centre for Human Development **Tevan Poghosyan** said that at present the punishment is main component of the fight against corruption in Armenia.

"Of course, punitive actions have contributed to the fact that the employees in government agencies avoid corruption risks, however, this does not promote providing quality services, and complaints will continue to remain. In addition there is no component in the fight against corruption, which is less important than the others," he said.

The report on Coalition's activities was presented at the conference. The Coalition’s Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 also was discussed. The election to the Coalition Governing Board was held as well, and 13 organisations were elected.

Further, the Closing Ceremony of the 2018 Anti-Corruption School for Young Leaders took place. 8 young people presented reports on their research in the anti-corruption field. After the presentations they were awarded certificates of completion.

More than 90 representatives of government agencies and civil society organisations attended the event.



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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 has provided sub-grants to 9 CSO coalitions that will be directed to the development of public policies and will have tangible results in the **9 target sectors** selected within the project, which are: Justice, Human Rights, Public Finance Management, Business, Education, Social Sector (social inclusion of children with disabilities), Agriculture, Economy and Energy.

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