



PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
A R M E N I A 2 0 0 3
ELECTIONS GUIDE

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Parliamentary Elections in Armenia 2003

ELECTIONS GUIDE

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A guidebook to elections for journalists and observers.

The elections guide contains general information on the country; data on parties running for the parliamentary election; relevant legislation and useful contacts in Armenia.

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PREFACE

The Elections Guide is a handbook for journalists and observers, both local and international. This is the second Elections Guide published by CMI. The previous Guide to this year's presidential election in Armenia proved a success, so we decided to make the publication of election guides a CMI tradition. The Guides are available in three languages – Armenian, English and Russian.

The Elections Guide contains reference information for election coverage. It has four chapters. Chapter 1 includes general info on Armenia and a brief post-soviet chronology. Chapter 2 contains Armenian legislation relevant to parliamentary elections: excerpts from the Constitution, Electoral Code, Media Law and the Law on TV and Radio Broadcasting. Some of the laws have not yet been officially translated into English; we did our best to make sure that the unofficial English translations contained in this handbook are true to the Armenian originals.

Chapter 3 describes the political parties that have nominated candidates for the parliamentary election. For each party, we give a brief description and a summary of its electoral program. To obtain this information, our team visited the parties' headquarters, asking party officials to summarize the main provisions of their programs. The texts submitted by the parties were then slightly abridged and translated into English. The team of the Guide is extremely grateful to the electoral headquarters for their vital cooperation.

The last chapter, especially practical for observers and journalists coming from abroad, contains contact information of Armenian government offices (the President, parliament, ministries, law enforcement agencies); major political parties active in Armenia; foreign embassies and international organizations; mass media and media organizations. We did our best to include the changes that happened since the previous edition, and heed the remarks made by the users of the first Guide.

We are very pleased to note that the preparation of this Guide was a joint effort of CMI staff and students.

Yerevan, April 2003

ARMENIA: GENERAL INFORMATION

Country name:**Conventional long form:** The Republic of Armenia (RA),**Conventional short form:** Armenia**Local long form:** Hayastani Hanrapetutyun;**Local short form:** Hayastan**State flag:** three horizontal bands of equal width: (from top down) red, blue, orange**Independence:** 21 September, 1991**Constitution:** July 5, 1995**Government type:** Presidential republic since 1991**Highest legislative body:** single-chamber National Assembly, its members are elected to four-year terms; election system - mixed majority-proportional**Head of state:** President Robert Kocharian (elected for his second term February 2003)**Speaker of National Assembly:** Armen Khachatrian (elected in November 1999)**Head of government:** Prime Minister Andranik Margarian**Official language:** Armenian, a separate branch in the Indo-European family of languages**The Armenian alphabet** was created by Mesrop Mashtots in 405 AD.

A considerable fraction of the population speaks Russian; knowledge of English is fairly widespread.

Area: 29,740 sq. km, (comparable with that of Belgium or Albania). Has common boundaries with Azerbaijan (787 km), Georgia (164 km), Iran (35 km) and Turkey (268 km)**Average elevation:** 1800 m**Highest point:** summit of the Aragats mountain (4095 m)

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Population: 3, 330, 099¹ (October 2001)

Ethnic composition: Armenians 98%, then, in decreasing numbers, Yezids (Kurds), Russians, Ukrainians, Assyrians, Greeks etc

Gender ratio (October 2001):

below 14 years of age: 22.2% (boys - 374,597; girls -363,115)

15-64 years: 67.7% (male -1,104,100; female -1,150,282)

above 65 years: 10.1% (male - 141,330; female - 196,675)

Average longevity (October 2001)

total population: 66.59 years

Female: 71.12 years, male: 62.27 years

Religions

Christians: Armenian Apostolic church, Orthodox Church, Baptists, Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses

Other confessions: Zoroastrians (Yezids).

Capital: Yerevan, population 1.2 mln.

Ten administrative provinces (marz): Aragatsotn, Ararat, Armavir, Vayots Dzor, Gegarkunik, Kotaik, Lori, Syunik, Tavush, Shirak

National currency: dram, current exchange rate about 585 dram for 1 USD (April 2003)

Banknote denominations: 10, 25, 50, 100, 200, 500, 1000, 5000, 20.000, 50 000 dram.

¹ Official data of the population census of October 2001 have not yet been published. All data given in this section are preliminary.

A BRIEF POST-SOVIET CHRONOLOGY

1988

Karabagh movement. Flows of Refugees. Spitak Earthquake.

February 20 – a session of the Council of People’s Deputies of the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) appealed to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to transfer the oblast from Azerbaijan to Armenia.

February 21 – the first mass demonstration in Yerevan.

February 27-29 – anti-Armenian pogroms and mass disorders in the town of Sumgait in Azerbaijan. Mass demonstrations and strikes in Yerevan. Formation of the «Karabagh» committee, the cradle of future independent Armenia’s political elites.

September 20 – volunteer troops begin to form. Squads of the USSR Ministry of Interior enter NKAO.

November-December – Flows of refugees: Armenians escaping from Azerbaijan, Azerbaijanis, from Armenia. A state of emergency is announced in several cities in both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

December 7 – A 6.9 Richter-scale earthquake affects the north of Armenia. By official reports, 25,000 died in the quake, 500,000 were left homeless (one sixth of Armenia’s population). The quake heavily damaged Armenia’s second largest city Leninakan (presently Gyumri) and destroyed the infrastructure of the entire region (52% of the economic potential of Armenia).

1989

Blockade. Energy Crisis.

The beginning of the year – the Metsamor nuclear power plant deactivated.

May-September – Azerbaijan, with the support of Turkey, imposed a transportation blockade on Nagorno-Karabagh and Armenia. An energy crisis broke out in Armenia.

December 1 – the Supreme Council of the Armenian Soviet Republic made a resolution on reunification of NKAO with Armenia.

1990

War. Karabagh Conflict Continued.

.....

January – Military action with the use artillery on the Armenian- Azerbaijani border. Anti-Armenian pogroms in Baku.

May 20 – Elections to the Supreme Council of Soviet Armenia. Two political parties dominate in the Supreme Council – the communists and the Armenian National Movement (AMN). ANM Board Chairman Levon Ter-Petrosyan is elected Chairman of the new Supreme Soviet.

August 23 – the first session of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia votes for the Declaration of Independence of Armenia.

1991

Armenian Declaration of Independence. The First Presidential Election.

.....

February 4 – Adoption of the Land Code.

March – the Supreme Soviet of Armenia voted on a resolution to hold a national referendum on secession from the USSR.

September 21 – The national referendum on secession from the USSR. More than 97% of the citizens voted for the sovereignty of Armenia.

September 23 – Based on referendum results, the Supreme Soviet declares the independence of Armenia.

October 16 – the first presidential election. Six candidates ran for the post. Levon Ter-Petrosian was elected the first President of Armenia by 83 % of the votes.

December 8 – the signing of the Belovezh Agreements suspended the existence of the Soviet Union.

December 10 – a referendum on the independence of the Nagorno-Karabagh Republic (NKR).

December 21 – in Alma-Ata, 11 former Soviet republics, now sovereign states, including Armenia, sign an agreement on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

1992**Membership in United Nations and OSCE. The Minsk Group.**
.....

January 30 – Armenia became a member state of the OSCE.

March 2 – Armenia became a UN member state.

March 24 – an OSCE conference in Helsinki decided to hold an international conference on Nagorno-Karabagh; Minsk Group co-chairmanship was established.

May 8 – Armenian troops seized the strategically important city of Shoushi in Nagorno-Karabagh.

May 15 – Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan signed the Collective Security Treaty. In 1993 Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus joined the treaty. At present its members are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan did not sign the prolongation of the treaty in 1999. In May 2002, member states announced the creation Collective Security Treaty Organization.

May 18 – Armenian troops took control over Lachin village in Nagorno-Karabagh, opening the “Lachin corridor” linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabagh.

August 11 - The US House of Representatives adopts Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, condemning the Azerbaijani aggression in Nagorno-Karabagh and prohibiting the allocation of the US governmental aid to Azerbaijan.

1993**Privatization. National Currency.**
.....

June 29 – Law on Privatization of Government-Owned, Public and Community Housing.

November 12 – UN Security Council issues resolution 884 with a demand to withdraw Armenian troops from “occupied Azerbaijani territories”.

November 19 – National currency – the Armenian dram - was introduced.

1994

Nagorno-Karabagh Ceasefire
.....

May 4-5 – Upon the initiative of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, the Kyrgyz parliament, the Foreign Ministry of Russia and the conflicting parties – Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh and Republic of Armenia – held talks in the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek that resulted in the signing of the Bishkek ceasefire protocol.

May 10 – Armenia signs the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework agreement.

December – President Levon Ter-Petrossian suspends the activities of Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutyun) (ARFD) for six months.

1995

The First Parliamentary Election. Adoption of the Constitution.

July 5 – the first parliamentary election since independence. 18 parties and organizations were elected to Parliament.

July 5 – a national referendum adopted the Constitution presently in effect.

November – the Metsamor nuclear power plant was reactivated. The energy crisis declined.

December 4 – the Law on Administrative-Territorial Division adopted.

1996

The Second Presidential Election.
.....

July 22 – the Law on Local Self-Government adopted.

September 22 – the second presidential election. Incumbent president Levon Ter-Petrossian won with 51.75% of the votes. The joint opposition candidate Vazgen Manoukian got 41.29%. The opposition did not recognize election results on account of mass violations during voting. Demonstrations continued.

September 25 - Opposition crowds broke into the Parliament building. Troops were brought into Yerevan. Demonstrations were prohibited. The internal legitimacy of the President declined.

December 3 – the Lisbon summit of OSCE. Armenia vetoed the 20-th item of the

summit resolution on the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan within the boundaries of the former Azerbaijani SSR. The institute of the three co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk group was founded. The co-chairmanship was taken by Russia, the US and France.

1997

Ter-Petrossian Suggests Concessions on Nagorno-Karabagh

.....

March 20 – NKR president Robert Kocharian, one of the founders and leaders of the Karabagh movement in Karabagh itself, is appointed Prime Minister of Armenia.

December 1 – President Levon Ter-Petrossian published an article in local press, entitled *War or Peace: Time to Think It Over*. The article suggests making concessions to Azerbaijan in the Karabagh issue in order to achieve a final legal resolution of the problem before Armenia loses the advantages gained in the war. The article was severely criticized by both the public and the elites, and eventually caused the President's resignation.

1998

Resignation of the President. The Third Presidential Election.

.....

February 3 – President Levon Ter-Petrossian resigned.

February-March – the third presidential election in Armenia. The incumbent Prime Minister Robert Kocharian and former chairman of the Communist Party of Soviet Armenia Karen Demirchian lead in the first round. R. Kocharian won the second round.

June 13 – the Law on Privatization of State Property adopted.

July 28 – the Civil Code of Armenia adopted.

1999

The Second Parliamentary Elections. Terrorist Attack on Parliament.

.....

February 17 – the Electoral Code adopted.

May 30 – Parliamentary elections. The newly elected parliament had 6 factions and 3 deputy groups. The majority (46 of 131 seats) was held by the “Unity” faction of “Unity” bloc co-chaired by former Soviet leader Karen Demirchian and Armenia's Defense Minister Vazgen Sargsian, a hero of the Karabagh war and one of the

motors behind Ter-Petrosian's resignation. Demirchian and Sargsian became Speaker of the Parliament and Prime-Minister of Armenia, respectively.

September – the first all-Armenian «Armenia-Diaspora» Forum was held in Yerevan.

October 27 – a terrorist raid on the Parliament killed 8 people, including Parliament Speaker Karen Demirchian and Prime Minister Vazgen Sargsian, two vice-speakers, a minister and several deputies. Domestic political instability lasted until spring 2000. Three governments changed in the following seven months.

November 2 – Aram Sargsian, the brother of the assassinated Vazgen Sargsian, was appointed acting Prime Minister. Given the acute political crisis and the isolated political elites, this palliative decision was expected to somewhat mitigate the situation.

**2000
Stabilization.**

.....

February-March – a 'government of national consent' was appointed, led by Aram Sargsian.

May – change of government. Andranik Margarian, head of the parliamentary majority, took the office of the Prime Minister.

**2001
Council of Europe. Population Census.**

.....

January 25 – Armenia was accepted to the Council of Europe.

October 10-19 – the first census since the collapse of the Soviet Union was held in Armenia.

**2002
Assets for Debts**

.....

January 25 – president George W. Bush signed the Freedom Support Act 2002, suspending Section 907

May 7 – the new Law on Local Self-Government adopted.

End of May – the Second All-Armenian "Armenia-Diaspora" Forum is held in Yerevan.

July 7 – co-chairmen of the Armenian-Russian intergovernmental committee on economic cooperation, Ilya Klebanov and Serge Sargsian, signed an agreement to exchange shares in five Armenian enterprises for Armenia’s debt amounting nearly \$100 mln (the “Assets for Debts” program).

October 20 – Local elections in Armenia.

2003

Admission to WTO. The Fourth Presidential Election.

.....

February 5 – Armenia was admitted to the World Trade Organization.

February 19 – the fourth presidential election in Armenia. 9 candidates ran for the presidency. The first round was won by incumbent President Robert Kocharian (49.48%) and opposition candidate Stepan Demirchian, son of the assassinated Karen Demirchian (28.22%). In the second round Robert Kocharian was reelected to his office with 67.48% of votes vs. 32.52% for Demirchian. The opposition refused to recognize election results. Mass demonstrations and meetings were held in Yerevan.

SELECTED ARMENIAN LEGISLATION

CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

CHAPTER 1.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

Article 1. The Republic of Armenia is a sovereign, democratic state, based on social justice and the rule of law.

Article 2. In the Republic of Armenia power lies with the people. The people exercise their power through free elections and referenda, as well as through state and local self-governing bodies and public officials as provided by the Constitution. The usurpation of power by any organization or individual constitutes a crime.

Article 3. The elections of the President, the National Assembly and local self-governing bodies of the Republic of Armenia, as well as referenda, are held based on the right to universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

CHAPTER 2.

FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Article 20. Everyone has the right to defend his personal and family life from illegal interference and his honor and good name from encroachment. It is prohibited to illegally collect, retain, utilize and disseminate information about a person's personal and family life. Everyone has the right to confidentiality of correspondence, telephone conversations, postal, telegraph and other communications, which right can be limited only by court decision.

Article 24. Everyone is entitled to assert his or her opinion. No one shall be forced to retract or change his or her opinion. Everyone is entitled to freedom of speech, including the freedom to seek, receive and disseminate information and ideas through any medium of information, regardless of state borders.

CHAPTER 4.**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Article 62. Legislative power in the Republic of Armenia: shall be vested in the National Assembly. Under cases provided by Articles 59, 66, 73, 74, 78, 81, 83, 84, 111, 112 of the Constitution, as well as for purposes of organizing its own activities, the National Assembly shall adopt resolutions which shall be signed and published by its President.

The powers of the National Assembly are determined by the Constitution.

The National Assembly shall operate in accordance with its rules of procedure.

Article 63. The National Assembly shall have one hundred and thirty one deputies.

The authority of the National Assembly shall expire in June of the fourth year following its elect on, on the opening day of the first session of the newly elected National Assembly, on which day the newly elected National Assembly shall assume its powers.

The National Assembly may be dissolved in accordance with the Constitution.

A newly elected National Assembly may not be dissolved during a one year period following its election.

The National Assembly may not be dissolved during a state of martial law, or under the cases foreseen under paragraph 14 of Article 55 of the Constitution, or when the removal of the President of the Republic from office is being deliberated.

Article 64. Any person having attained the age of twenty five, having been a citizen of the Republic of Armenia- for the preceding five years, having permanently resided in the Republic for the preceding five years, and who has the right to vote, may be elected as a Deputy.

Article 65. A Deputy may not hold any other public office, nor engage in any other paid occupation, except for scientific, educational and creative work. The compensation and guarantees for the normal functioning of a Deputy shall be prescribed by law.

Article 66. A Deputy shall not be bound by any compulsory mandate and shall be guided by his or her conscience and convictions. A Deputy shall not be prosecuted or held liable for actions arising from the performance of his or her status, or for the expression of his or her opinions expressed in the National Assembly, provided these are not slanderous or defamatory.

A Deputy may not be arrested and subjected to administrative or criminal prosecution through judicial proceedings without the consent of the National Assembly.

Article 67. The powers of a Deputy shall terminate upon the expiration of the term of the National Assembly, upon the dissolution of the same, upon violation of the provisions of part I of Article 65 of the Constitution, upon loss of citizenship of the Republic of Armenia, for unfounded absences from half of the floor votes during a single session upon being sentenced to imprisonment, when deemed incapacitated and upon his or her resignation.

A Deputy's term of office shall be terminated in a manner prescribed by the rules of procedure of the National Assembly.

Article 68. Regular elections to the National Assembly shall be held within sixty days prior to the expiration of the term of the current Assembly.

Procedures for elections to the National Assembly shall be prescribed by law.

The date of elections shall be fixed by Presidential decree.

The first session of a newly elected National Assembly shall convene on the second Thursday following the election of at least two thirds of the total number of Deputies.

Until the election of the President of the National Assembly, its meetings shall be chaired by the Deputy who is most senior in age.

Article 69. The regular sessions of the National Assembly shall convene twice per year from the second Monday of September to the second Wednesday of December and from the first Monday of February to the second Wednesday of June.

The sittings of the National Assembly shall be open to the public. Closed door sittings may be convened by a resolution of the National Assembly.

Article 70. An extraordinary session of the National Assembly may be convened by the President of the Republic, at the initiative of at least one third of the total number of Deputies, or at the initiative of the Government.

An extraordinary session of the National Assembly convening upon the request of the majority of the total number of Deputies shall be held in accordance with the agenda and timetable of the Deputies requesting the session.

An extraordinary session may not last for more than six days.

An extraordinary sitting of the National Assembly may be convened by its President, upon the initiative of the Government or of at least one third of the total number of Deputies.

Extraordinary sittings shall follow the agenda and timetable specified by the requesting party.

Article 71. Laws and resolutions of the National Assembly shall be passed by the majority vote of the Deputies present at a given sitting, if more than half of the total number of Deputies participate in the voting, except for cases covered under Articles 57, 58, 59, 72, 74, 84, 111 of the Constitution, and paragraph 4 of Article 75, the first paragraph of Article 79, and Section 3 of Article 83 of the Constitution.

Article 72. The National Assembly shall deliberate on a priority basis any law which has been remanded by the President.

Should the National Assembly decline to accept the recommendations and objections presented by the President of the Republic, it shall pass the remanded law, again with a majority vote of the number of Deputies.

Article 73. There shall be six standing committees established in the National Assembly. Ad hoc committees may be established as necessary.

The standing committees are established for the preliminary consideration of draft legislation and other proposals and for the submission of findings on such legislation and proposals to the National Assembly. Ad hoc committees are established for the preliminary consideration of special draft legislation or for the submission of findings and reports on specific events and facts to the National Assembly.

Article 74. Within twenty days of the formation of a newly elected National Assembly or of its own formation, the Government shall present its program to the National Assembly for its approval, thus raising the question of a vote of confidence before the National Assembly.

A draft resolution expressing a vote of no confidence toward the Government may be proposed within twenty four hours of the Government's raising of the question of the vote of confidence by not less than one third of the total number of Deputies. The proposal for a vote of no confidence shall be voted on no sooner than forty eight hours and no later than seventy two hours from its initial submittal. The proposal must be passed by a majority vote of the total number of Deputies. If a vote of no confidence toward the Government is not proposed, or such proposal is not passed, the Government's program shall be considered to have been approved by the National Assembly. If a vote of no confidence is passed, the Prime Minister shall submit the resignation of the Government to the President of the Republic.

Article 75. The right to initiate legislation in the National Assembly shall belong to the Deputies and the Government. The Government shall stipulate the sequence for debate of its proposed draft legislation and may request that they be voted on only with amendments acceptable to it. Any draft

legislation which is considered urgent by a Government resolution shall be debated and voted on by the National Assembly within a one month period. The National Assembly shall consider all draft legislation reducing state revenues or increasing state expenditures only upon the agreement of the Government and shall pass such legislation by a majority vote of the total number of Deputies.

The Government may raise the question of a vote of confidence in conjunction with its proposed legislation. If the National Assembly does not adopt a vote of no confidence against the Government as provided by Article 74 of the Constitution, then the Government's proposed legislation will be considered to have been adopted.

The Government may not raise the issue of a vote of confidence in conjunction with a proposed legislation more than twice during any single session.

Article 76. The National Assembly shall adopt the state budget upon its submittal by the Government. If the budget is not adopted by the start of the fiscal year, all expenditures shall be incurred in the same proportions as in the previous year's budget.

The procedure for debate on and adoption of the state budget shall be prescribed by law.

Article 77. The National Assembly shall supervise the implementation of the state budget, as well as of the use of loans and credits received from foreign governments and international organizations.

The National Assembly shall examine the annual report on the realization of the state budget and adopt the report based on the findings of the National Assembly's Oversight Office.

Article 78. In order to ensure the legislative basis of the Government's program, the National Assembly may authorize the Government to adopt resolutions that have the effect of law that do not contravene any laws are in force during a period specified by the National Assembly. Such resolutions must be signed by the President of the Republic.

Article 79. The National Assembly shall elect its President for the duration of its full term by a majority vote of the total number of Deputies.

The President of the National Assembly shall chair the sittings, manage its material and financial resources, and shall ensure its normal functioning. The National Assembly shall elect two Vice Presidents of the National Assembly.

Article 80. Deputies are entitled to ask questions to the Government. For one sitting each week during the regular sessions of the Assembly, the Prime Minister and the members of the Government shall answer questions raised by the Deputies.

The National Assembly shall not pass any resolutions in conjunction with the questions raised by the Deputies.

Article 81. Upon the recommendation of the President of the Republic, the National Assembly:

- 1) may declare an amnesty;
- 2) shall ratify or revoke the international treaties signed by the Republic of Armenia. The range of international agreements which are subject to ratification by the National Assembly shall be prescribed by law;
- 3) may declare war.

The National Assembly, upon the determination of the Constitutional Court, may suspend the execution of the provisions of Sections 13 and 14 of Article 55 of the Constitution.

Article 82. The National Assembly, upon the recommendation of the Government, shall determine the administrative-territorial divisions of the Republic.

Article 83. The National Assembly:

- 1) shall appoint the Chairman of the Central Bank upon the recommendation of the President of the Republic;
- 2) shall appoint the Chairman of the National Assembly's Oversight Office upon the recommendation of the President of the National Assembly and members and the President of the Constitutional Court from among the members of the Court.

If within thirty days of the formation of the Constitutional Court the National Assembly fails to appoint the President of the Constitutional Court, the President of the Constitutional Court shall then be appointed by the President of the Republic;

- 3) may, upon the determination of the Constitutional Court, terminate the powers of a member of the Constitutional Court the Assembly has appointed, approve such member's arrest, and authorize the initiation of administrative or criminal proceedings against such member through the judicial process.

Article 84. The National Assembly may adopt a vote of no confidence toward the Government by a majority vote of the total number of Deputies. The National Assembly may not exercise this right in situations of martial law or under circumstances provided by Section 14 of Article 55 of the Constitution.

ELECTORAL CODE

PART ONE

SECTION ONE: GENERAL PROVISIONS

CHAPTER 1.

FUNDAMENTAL PROVISIONS

Article 1: Electoral Bases

1. In accordance with Article 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, elections of the President, elections to the National Assembly, elections of the local self-governing bodies of the Republic of Armenia are held through universal, equal, direct suffrage, by secret ballot.
2. Citizens of the Republic of Armenia having the right to vote participate in elections directly, by the expression of free will, on voluntary basis.
3. The state encourages that the elections of the President of the Republic, elections to National Assembly, local self-governing bodies are held under competitive and alternative principles.
4. The state holds responsibility for the preparation, organization and conduct of elections, and for the legality of elections.

Article 7: Transparency of Elections

1. Elections are prepared and conducted in a transparent way.
2. Decisions of electoral commissions, national government and local self-governing bodies, related to the preparation and conduct of elections are published in the official press, within three days after the decisions have been taken.
3. In the course of the sessions of the commissions and during the voting, in the way prescribed by this Code, the Chairman of Electoral Commission ensures the participation of proxies, observers and the representatives of mass media, in the activities of electoral commissions and ensures necessary and equal working conditions for them.
4. Three days before the elections of the President of the Republic and to the National Assembly the Central Electoral Commission publishes the total number of the voters in the Republic of Armenia.
5. In the procedure prescribed by this Code, citizens are informed about the composition, location and working hours of Electoral Commissions, on the formation of precincts and precinct centers, on the dates for presenting appeals about the inaccuracies in the voter lists, on the nomination and registration of

candidates, on the day of voting and the election results.

6. On the voting day, the precinct electoral commissions shall transfer data to the Regional Electoral Commissions periodically - every three hours - on the number of voters that have participated in voting. Regional Electoral Commissions summarize these data, make them public and periodically - every three hours - forward them to the Central Electoral Commission. During national elections (Presidential elections as well as regular and extraordinary elections to National Assembly are considered to be national elections) the Central Electoral Commission, starting from 11:00 a.m., regularly announces the data on the number of voters that have participated in the elections. The last data are made public not later than 11:00 p.m. The Central Electoral Commission officially publishes the final data on the number of voters that have participated in the elections on the next day at 12:00 p.m.
7. During the sessions of the electoral commissions, as well as at any time during the voting, proxies, accredited observers and the representatives of mass media have the right to be present at the precinct center.
8. Immediately after the voting is completed, from 8:00 p.m. until the announcement of the preliminary results of elections, periodically - every three hours - there shall be live TV and radio transmission from the Central Electoral Commission.

CHAPTER 4.

PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Article 18: Basic Principles for Pre-Election Campaign

1. The state ensures the free implementation of citizens' pre-election campaign. The pre-election campaign is exercised on equal basis. It is ensured by the state bodies, for the purpose of organization of pre-election meetings, meetings of candidates with the electorate and other events related to elections, by providing them halls and other premises, upon the request of electoral commissions. They are provided to the candidates and parties, running in elections, on equal basis, free of charge, in accordance with the timetable and procedures established by the Central Electoral Commission.
2. Citizens, parties, party alliances (hereinafter party), and Non-Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Armenia have the right to campaign for or against any candidate or party, by means not prohibited by law.
3. The candidates and parties are guaranteed equal conditions for access to mass media.

4. It is forbidden to conduct the pre-election campaign and to disseminate campaign documents of any kind to:
 - 1). State and local self-governing bodies, as well as their staff while performing their official duties;
 - 2). Members and Judges of the Constitutional Court, officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Security, officials of the Prosecutor's office, and the military;
 - 3). Charitable and religious organizations;
 - 4). Foreign citizens and organizations.
5. The election campaign commences on the day following the last day envisaged for the registration of candidates and parties, and ends on the day prior to the day of voting. Any election campaign is prohibited on the day of voting and the day prior to it. Campaign documents, which are not at the precinct center, stay during the day of voting in their places.
6. Pre-election campaign can be held through mass media, through electoral public events (such as pre-election rallies and meetings with electorate, public electoral discussions, debates, rallies, marches) by printing publications, disseminating audiovisuals.
7. During the pre-election campaign candidates and parties are banned from giving (promising) - personally or through other means - money, food, bonds, and goods to citizens free of charge or on privileged terms or rendering (promising) services.
8. The candidates and the parties are bound to observe the procedures for organization of the pre-election campaign. Electoral Commissions oversee the observance of the established procedure of the pre-election campaign. In the event of violation of the procedures the commission that has registered the candidate or the party, appeals to the relevant bodies, in order to prevent them, as well as to the Court - to declare the registration of that candidate or party electoral list out of force. The Court, after receiving such appeals from electoral commissions, has to pass a judgment within five days period, and in case they are received within five days prior to the day of voting - immediately.
9. The arrested or detained candidates carry out their pre-election campaign through their proxies. For that purpose, in the period of the pre-election campaign, the arrested and detained candidates have the right of having daily meetings, for up to two hours, with not more than three proxies, at the institutions that have the right to hold the arrested or the detained.

Article 19: Non-Allowance of Abuse of the Right of Pre-Election Campaigning

During the pre-election campaign it is forbidden to call for the violent overthrow of

the constitutional order, racial, national, religious and other supremacy, publication and dissemination of materials stimulating racial, national or religious hatred.

Article 20: Pre-Election Campaign through Mass Media

Candidates for the President of the Republic and the Parties registered by the proportional system for the National Assembly have the right of paid and free of charge airtime (including live broadcasting) on the state radio and television, on equal conditions.

2. The Central Electoral Commission establishes the procedure for the provision of free airtime on the state radio and television for candidates for the President of the Republic and for the Parties that have presented party lists based on the proportional system for the National Assembly.
3. Candidates and parties have the right to have airtime also on the state local radio and TV companies, on equal conditions.
4. The heads of the official state periodical press shall ensure equal conditions for the candidates and parties.
5. Pre-election campaign through mass media is implemented in the form of public debates, round-tables, press conferences, interviews, political advertisements and other forms not prohibited by the law.
6. It is forbidden to interrupt the radio and television broadcasts of pre-election campaign with advertisements of goods and services.
7. It is forbidden to establish campaign headquarters at precinct centers, and within seven days prior to the day of voting - campaigning at the precinct centers.
8. Television and radio broadcasts with pre-election campaign shall be video- and audio-recorded. They are preserved for at least six months.
9. The state and local self-governing bodies, for the purpose of meetings, rallies and assemblies, organized for pre-election campaigning, allocate required territories to candidates and parties free of charge, according to the procedure established by the Central Electoral Commission. It is forbidden to allocate historical-cultural buildings and adjacent territories for such purposes.

Article 22: Prohibition of Influencing the Expression of Citizens' Free Will

1. Reporters of state radio and television, staffs of the editorial offices that are registered as candidates are banned from highlighting the elections on the state radio and television.
2. During the pre-election campaign, the officials and members of the state and local self-governing bodies, as well as the employees of the state-owned mass media

are banned from making use of their powers (authorities) for creation of uneven conditions between the candidates, or influencing the expression of citizens' free will, through prejudiced support. Whenever nominated as candidates these people make use of the state-owned means of mass media in the procedure established by this code.

3. It is forbidden to publish the results of public polls on the ratings of candidates and parties within the last seven days of the pre-election campaign.

Article 23: Prohibition of the Pre-Election Campaigning on the Day of Voting and the Day Prior to it

1. On the day of voting and the day prior to it, within the building where the precinct center is located or in its vicinity, as well as right at its entrance, it is forbidden to influence on the voters orally or in written form, through music or visual means, to collect signatures, as well as to campaign in other ways.
2. Until the end of the voting it is forbidden to publish voters' survey results with the question on who they have voted for.
3. It is forbidden to assemble in groups on the day of the election in the area surrounding the precinct center, in the radius of 50 meters.

Article 25: Pre-election fund

1. For the purpose of funding their pre-election campaign, candidates and parties have the right to create a pre-election fund. The means of the election funds of the candidates for the President of the Republic and parties are accumulated in the Central Bank of the Republic of Armenia, and of the other candidates - in any bank, operating on the territory of the Republic of Armenia (on a special account). The means of the pre-election fund are managed by candidates and parties. Based on the written application of the registered candidates and parties, banks open temporary special accounts. Revenues are not accumulated or paid of these accounts.

Pre-election funds are formed from:

- 1) personal means of the candidate;
 - 2) means allocated to the candidate by the party, which has nominated him/her;
 - 3) own means of the party;
 - 4) voluntary contributions by physical and legal persons.
2. The following have no right to make contributions to the election funds:
 - 1) state and local self-governing bodies;
 - 2) budgetary institutions (organizations);

- 3) foreign physical and legal persons;
- 4) persons without citizenship;
- 5) those economic organizations, in the charter or share capital of which the Republic of Armenia or its communities have a share;
- 6) those organizations which have foreign means in the amount of more than 30 per cent in their share capital;
- 7) charitable and religious organizations, international organizations and international non-governmental movements.

The amounts paid to the pre-election funds by the above-mentioned physical and legal persons are transferred to the state budget.

3. The Central Electoral Commission establishes the procedure for voluntary contributions to the pre-election funds.
4. This Code establishes the maximum amount of contributions to the pre-election funds by physical and legal persons. Contributions exceeding the established amount and the money left in the pre-election funds after the elections are transferred to the state budget.
5. Means of the pre-election funds are spent through proxies of the candidate and the party.
6. Those banks, in which special temporary accounts have been opened, periodically - every three days - submit a notice to the relevant electoral commission on the contributions made to the pre-election funds of candidates and parties. These banks return the amounts exceeding the maximum amounts established by this Code, to those having the right of making contributions to the pre-election funds.
7. If the candidate or the party besides the means of the pre-election fund uses other means for the pre-election campaign, the Court, based upon the application of the Central Electoral Commission, recognizes the registration of the candidate or the party list as out of force.
8. All the transactions connected with the accounts of candidates' and parties' pre-election funds are terminated from the day of voting.
9. The Central Electoral Commission can allow candidates and parties to make payments from the fund also after the voting day, for the transactions carried out before the day of voting.
10. In the event of the elections being declared as not held, the means in the pre-election funds are frozen until the registration of candidates and parties for the new elections. The candidates and parties re-registered for new elections can use the means left in their pre-election funds. In case the candidates or parties have

not been registered for new elections, the means left in their pre-election funds are transferred to the state budget.

11. Not later than one month after the elections the candidates and parties submit a declaration to the electoral commissions that had registered them, on the use of the available amounts in their pre-election funds. The Central Electoral Commission establishes the specimen of the declaration and the procedure for its submission. The declaration is published in the procedure established by the Central Electoral Commission.

CHAPTER 6.

PROXIES, OBSERVERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF MASS MEDIA

Article 27: The Status of the Proxy

1. After the registration the candidates and parties, for the protection of their interests in their relationship with the electoral commissions, state and local self-governing bodies, organizations and mass media can have proxies. Only citizens of the Republic of Armenia that have the right to vote can become proxies.
2. After the registration of candidates and party lists, sealed certificates are given to the proxies, based on the submitted, but no more than three times the number of precincts. Certificates are issued within five days after the request has been submitted. The relevant commission states the candidate's first name, last name, and the name of the party, on the certificate. The candidate or the party leader fills out the certificates and allocates them to the proxies.
3. The Central Electoral Commission establishes the procedure for the registration of the proxies. The candidate or his/her authorized representative, the party leaders can at any time recall their proxies and appoint the new ones, informing of it the relevant electoral commission, in writing.
4. Members of the Constitutional Court, judges, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Security, Ministry of Defense, Prosecutor's office, Tax Inspection and Customs Department, Social Insurance (services) agents, the military, the clergymen, members of electoral commissions, heads of the state-owned means of mass media and foreign citizens cannot become proxies.

Article 28: The Right of the Observation Mission

1. During the election the following have the right of observation mission:
 - 1). international organizations,
 - 2). representatives of foreign countries,

- 3). those Non-Governmental organizations of the Republic of Armenia and of foreign countries, whose charter provisions include issues of democracy and protection of human rights and who do not support the candidates or parties
2. The Central Electoral Commission establishes the procedure for performing the observation mission.

Article 29: Accreditation of Observers

The organizations and persons mentioned in Article 28 of this Code can perform observation after having been accredited with the Central Electoral Commission.

2. Requests for accreditation are presented to the Central Electoral Commission starting from the day of assignment of elections, but not later than ten days prior to the day of voting.
3. The Central Electoral Commission issues the credentials for performing of observation to the relevant organization not later than seven days after the request has been received.
4. If the large number of the organizations that have applied for observation can create technical difficulties for voting and vote count at the precinct centers, then the priority is given to those organizations, that guarantee the conduct of observation on all the territory of the Republic of Armenia.
5. In case if the observers, after having been accredited, support any candidate or party, the Central Electoral Commission has the right to deprive the relevant organization of the observation rights.
6. The observation rights of all organizations and persons are discontinued 10 days after the end of elections.

Article 30: Rights, Responsibilities and Guarantees of Activity of Proxies, Domestic and International Observers (Hereinafter Observers), and the Representatives of Mass Media

1. Proxies, Observers, and the Representatives of Mass Media have the right to:
 - 1). be present at the sessions of electoral commissions, and during the voting
 - at the precinct center;
 - 2) get familiarized, without impediments, with the electoral documents, ballot specimens, decisions of electoral commissions, protocols of the sessions, to receive their copies and to make excerpts;
 - 3). appeal the decisions, actions or inaction of electoral commissions.

2. Proxies, observers, and the representatives of mass media have no right to intervene in the work of electoral commissions.
3. One proxy of each candidate and party, running in National Assembly proportional elections, can attend, with an advisory vote, the session of the electoral commission, and during the voting.
4. On the day of voting proxies and observers monitor the work of electoral commission. To that end they can present their remarks and proposals to the Chairman of the Commission, who then takes appropriate measures.
5. No restriction of the rights of proxies, observers, and representatives of mass media is allowed.
6. Proxies, observers, and representatives of mass media cannot be subjected to liability for their opinion expressed on the course of elections and summarized results.

CHAPTER 12.

SUMMARIZATION OF THE ELECTION RESULTS, PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING THE INACCURACIES

Article 60: Procedure for Summarization of the Results of Voting and Determining the Inaccuracies at Precincts

1. The Chairman of the Precinct Electoral Commission bans the access of voters to the precinct center at 8:00 p.m., enables the voters at the precinct center to vote, closes the ballot box slot, invites asks all the persons not entitled to attend the sessions of the Precinct Electoral Commission out, and closes the precinct center. After these steps are performed the Precinct Electoral Commission starts the session for summarization of the voting results. For that purpose:
 - 1). unused ballots, wrongly marked by voters ballots and returned ballots are counted, cancelled in the procedure established by the Central Electoral Commission, and sealed;
 - 2). the total number of voters is counted based on voter lists;
 - 3). the number of voters, that have received ballots, based on the signatures available in the voter list is counted; afterwards the above-mentioned lists are sealed;
 - 4). the ballot box is opened.
2. The Chairman of the commission takes one ballot out of the ballot box, declares not approved specimen of the ballot, the validity or invalidity of the ballot, and in case the ballot is valid ballot - also who it is voted for. Upon request he/she shall pass the ballot to the other members of the commission. In case a commission

member disagrees with the opinion of the Chairman, he/she submits an objection. It is put to vote. In the event of the objection, based on the voting results, and in case of no objection, in accordance with his/her statement the Chairman puts the ballot in the pack of ballots for the particular candidate (party), “against all”, or “invalid” ballots, after which takes the next ballot out of the ballot box. This action is repeated for all the ballots available in the ballot box. During the implementation of the assortment of the ballots the members of the commission are banned from making notes, as well as having pens, pencils or other objects for making notes.

3. After the assortment of all the ballots available in the ballot box the Chairman, in the presence of the members of the commission, one by one counts the invalid ballots, ballots with votes against all, as well as the votes given for each candidate (party). Based on the results, the total number of valid ballots of approved specimen and of votes given for the candidates is counted. The counted and assorted ballots are wrapped and sealed, in the procedure established by the Central Electoral Commission.
4. Afterwards the Precinct Electoral Commission, based on the data of the precinct summarization protocol, compiles a protocol on the amount of inaccuracies. The commission decides the amount of inaccuracies in the following way:
 - 1). compares the number of ballots given to the Precinct Electoral Commissions, with the total number of the ballots in the ballot box and the cancelled ballots. The difference is noted as the amount of first inaccuracy;
 - 2). compares the number of signatures in the voter lists with the number of the ballots in the ballot box. The difference in absolute number is noted as the amount of second inaccuracy;
- 3). the amounts of inaccuracies mentioned in sub-points one and two of this point are added. The total is the amount of inaccuracies at that precinct;
5. Each activity envisaged in the points three and four of this Article are carried out in the order mentioned, and each action is carried out after the previous one is over, and a protocol has been compiled. On each of the mentioned actions a separate protocol, in two copies, is compile and signed by the members of the commission attending the session, one of the copies being wrapped and sealed together with documents serving as a basis.

Article 63: Procedure for the Summarization of the Election Results at the Central Electoral Commission

1. Based on the preliminary results of elections received from the Regional Electoral Commissions the Central Electoral Commission, not later than 28 hours after the

completion of voting announces the preliminary results of elections, the number of votes cast for each candidate, the total number of the voters and the amount of inaccuracies.

2. Until the announcement of the preliminary results of the elections the session of the Central Electoral Commission is not interrupted.
3. The Central Electoral Commission, whose session can be attended by persons entitled to be present at the session, based on the complete final results of the elections in the Regions, not later than within 72 hours after completion of the voting, and in case of the complaints in the Court, or Regional Electoral Commission on the results of voting in the precincts - within five days, compiles the summarization protocol of the election, entering the overall information and that by Regions:
 - 1) the total number of the voters by voter lists;
 - 2) the number of the registered voters, who have received ballots, according to the signatures;
 - 3) the number of ballots, allocated to the Precinct Electoral Commissions;
 - 4) the number of cancelled ballots;
 - 5) the number of valid ballots in the ballot boxes;
 - 6) the number of invalid ballots;
 - 7) the total number of the ballots in the ballot box;
 - 8) the number of the ballots cast against all candidates (parties);
 - 9) the number of votes cast for each of the candidate (party);
 - 10) the total number of votes cast for candidates (parties);
 - 11) the amount of inaccuracies.
4. The protocol is signed by the members of the commission attending the session; it is sealed by the Chairman of the commission.
5. If any member of the commission has a special opinion on the data of the protocol, he/she makes a remark next to his/her signature and submits his/her written opinion, which is attached to the protocol.
6. If any member of the commission refuses to sign the protocol, a note thereof is made in the protocol.
7. Upon the request of the proxy of a candidate (party) or an observer they are provided with a copy of the summarization protocol on election results ratified by the signatures of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the commission and the seal of the commission.

8. The preliminary summarization protocols of the elections of the President of the Republic and elections to the National Assembly by proportional system are compiled within two hours after the voting is completed.
9. The Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission, or upon his request one of the members of the commission, after the voting is completed, makes a report on the state television and radio, every three hours, on the current results of the elections of the President of the Republic and the elections to the National Assembly by proportional system. Within three hours after taking a decision on the elections of the President of the Republic and the elections to the National Assembly by proportional system, the Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission, or upon his request - one of the members of the commission makes a live report on the state television and radio on final official results of the elections.

SECTION FIVE ELECTIONS TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

CHAPTER 19. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 94: Composition of the National Assembly

In accordance with Article 63 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, the National Assembly is composed of one hundred and thirty one deputies.

Article 95: The Electoral System

1. Elections to the National Assembly are held by proportional and majoritarian systems.
2. 56 deputies are elected by proportional system from among the number of candidates nominated for deputy by lists from one multi-mandate constituency, covering the entire territory of the Republic.
3. 75 deputies are elected by majoritarian system - one deputy from one constituency.

Article 96: Electoral Right

1. Every citizen is entitled to one vote at the multi-mandate constituency, and one vote at the single-mandate constituency.
2. A citizen can be nominated exclusively by one list and exclusively at one majoritarian constituency.

Article 97: Requirements for a Candidate for Deputy

1. In accordance with Article 64 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia,

anyone who has attained the age of 25 years, has been a citizen of the Republic of Armenia for the last five years, has been a permanently residing in the Republic of Armenia for the last five years and has the right to vote, can be elected a Deputy.

2. Members of the Constitutional Court, judges, Ministers, Deputy Ministers, the Mayor of Yerevan, Deputy Mayor, Governors, Deputy Governors, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Security, employees of tax inspection and customs department, employees of the prosecutor's office, the military, and the insurance agents (employees of the social security) cannot be nominated as candidates for deputy to the National Assembly by majoritarian system. The above-mentioned persons can be registered as candidates for the deputy of the National Assembly after they resign from the positions they are holding.
3. Members of the Constitutional Court, judges, employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Security, employees of tax inspection and customs department, employees of the prosecutor's office, and the military cannot be nominated as candidates for deputy to the National Assembly by proportional system. The above-mentioned persons can be registered as candidates for the deputy of the National Assembly by proportional system after they resign from the position they are holding.

Article 98: Constituencies

1. For conducting the National Assembly majoritarian elections 75 constituencies are formed on the territory of the Republic of Armenia, which shall meet the following requirements:
 - 1). equal number of voters shall be included in the constituencies; up to 15 per cent difference of the number of voters is allowed;
 - 2). constituencies form a unified territory; it is not allowed to include precincts without common borders in one constituency.
 - 3). constituencies are formed and numbered by the Central Electoral Commission, on the basis of the number of voters registered in their regions, which is provided by the Governors. The data is submitted according to the communities, at least 95 days prior to the day of elections.
2. The Central Electoral Commission establishes and publishes the numbered list of the single-mandate constituencies and their scheme, at least 90 days prior to the day of elections.
3. During the extraordinary elections constituencies do not undergo changes.

CHAPTER 20.**NOMINATION AND REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DEPUTIES****Article 99: The Right to Nominate a Candidate for Deputy**

1. Parties and party alliances have the right to nominate candidates for deputies to the National Assembly by proportional system.
2. Party alliances can be set up in the event if at least two parties form a pre-electoral union.
3. In the period of elections, parties, within a party alliance, cannot join other party alliances.
4. The decision on joining a party alliance is made by the permanently functioning body of the party.
5. The party alliance is registered in the Central Electoral Commission not later than within three days after the submission of the decision of the permanently functioning body of the parties.
6. Lists of the party alliances are compiled from the separate lists presented by the each of the parties within the alliance. The order of the candidates in the party lists of the alliance is decided during the joint consultations of the parties within the alliance.
7. In the event of withdrawal of a party from the party alliance the names of candidates submitted by those parties is withdrawn from the party alliance list.
8. Parties registered in the Republic of Armenia, in accordance with the procedure in Article 104, and the citizens, in accordance with Article 105 of this Code have the right to nominate candidates for deputies of the National Assembly by majoritarian system.

Article 100: Nomination of Candidates for Deputies of the National Assembly by Proportional System

1. Parties present application to the Central Electoral Commission on running in elections of the National Assembly by proportional system, upon the decision of their permanently functioning body.
2. Each party has the right to nominate only one list of candidates for deputies. The party within a party alliance has no right to nominate a separate candidates' list on its own behalf. Women shall make at least five per cent of the candidates in the electoral lists presented by a party for the elections to the National Assembly by proportional system. Non-partisan representatives can also be included in the electoral lists presented by a party, by proportional system.
3. The application of a party on running in the elections of the National Assembly

shall include:

- 1). party charter (in the event of the party alliance - the charters of all the parties in the alliance), the document on naming the alliance;
 - 2). decision of the permanently functioning body of the party on the nomination of candidates for deputies to the National Assembly by the proportional system, the list of the candidates, which includes - by consecutive numbers - the family name, first name, date of birth, passport number, place of registered residence, place of work and position (occupation) of nominated candidates;
 - 3). receipt on the payment of the electoral deposit in the amount of 2,500 times the minimum salary;
 - 4). references, that the candidates nominated by party lists have been a citizen of the Republic of Armenia within the last five years;
 - 5). references, that the candidates nominated by party lists have been permanently residing in the Republic of Armenia for the last five years;
 - 6). written statement of the candidates nominated by party lists of their consent for being registered as candidates for deputies;
 - 7). declaration about his/her private property and his/her and his/her family members' income for the last one year;
 - 8). separate party lists presented by the parties within the alliance.
4. References mentioned in sub-points four and five of point three of this Article are allocated to the citizens nominated as candidates, in the procedure established by the Central Electoral Commission, by the authorized state body within three days after the application.
 5. For the registration with the Central Electoral Commission the permanently functioning body of a party submits the data of up to three plenipotentiary representatives (family name, first name, date of birth, place of work and position (occupation)).
 6. The Central Electoral Commission making sure of the validity of the submitted documents decides to issue official papers for the support of nomination (in the amount requested) to the party, in the person of its plenipotentiary representatives registered in the Central Electoral Commission. The Central Electoral Commission establishes the procedure for the allocation of the official papers of support.
 7. If a party within an alliance has refused to be registered, its representatives shall be withdrawn from the general list.
 8. The sum of the electoral deposit of the party that has received mandates

in the National Assembly by proportional system is returned; the electoral deposit of the parties that have not received mandates - is transferred to the state budget.

9. A party list is considered as nominated, if at least 30,000 citizens have supported its nomination and expressed their will by signing the official papers for the support of nomination.
10. The procedure for collecting signatures in the official papers for the support of nomination of parties, which have submitted application on participation in the elections of the National Assembly by proportional system, and the verification of validity is carried out according to the procedure set forth in Articles 69-70 of this Code.
11. In the event of recognizing the elections as invalid, the sum of the electoral deposit is returned.

Article 101: Registration of Party Lists, running in the Elections of the National Assembly by Proportional System

1. A party list is considered as registered, if the party submits all required documents within the determined dates and in compliance with the procedure determined by the Code, and if at least 30,000 valid signatures are available in the official papers for the support of its nomination.
2. In case of objections around the registration of party list, a voting will be set. If there are no objections, the list is considered registered. The registration of the party list may be rejected following the decision, taken by two thirds of the total number of the members of the commission.
3. The session of the commission discussing the issue of registration of the party list, can be attended by the plenipotentiary representative of the party.

Article 102: Denial in Registration or Recognition as Invalid of a Party List and the Candidate on it

1. Central Electoral Commission denies the registration of a party list if:
 - 1) in accordance with the procedure of this code, the number of valid signatures for the support of the nomination of the party is less than 30,000.
 - 2) Documents submitted for registration are falsified.
2. Central Electoral Commission denies the registration of a citizen in the party list, if
 - 1) restrictions set forth by the Code extend onto him/her;
 - 2) documents submitted for his/her registration are falsified
 Central Electoral Commission denies the registration of a citizen in the party

list by at least two-third vote of the total number of its members.

3. In case of denial of registration of a party list, the sum of electoral deposit is paid back.
4. Central Electoral Commission declares the registration of the party list invalid, if the following facts are disclosed after the registration:
 - 1) restrictions set forth by the Code extend onto the party list;
 - 2) documents submitted for registration are falsified.
5. Central Electoral Commission declares the registration of a candidate in the party list invalid, if the following facts are disclosed after the registration:
 - 1) restrictions set forth by the Code extend onto the candidate;
 - 2) documents submitted for the registration of the candidate are falsified.
In the above-mentioned cases, candidate is taken out of the party list.
6. If registration of party list is declared invalid, electoral deposit as well as all means of pre-electoral fund are transferred to the state budget.
7. Central Electoral Commission may declare the registration of the party list or a candidate in the party list invalid by at least two-third vote of the total number of its members.
8. The decision of Central Electoral Commission on the denial or recognition as invalid of the registration of party list or a person in it may be appealed to Court within three days after it has been taken.
9. Based on the verdict of Court on recognizing unlawful the decision on the denial or recognition as invalid of registration of the party list and a citizen in it, the party list or the citizen in it shall be recognized registered or re-registered.

Article 103: Recognition of the Registration of the Party List and the Candidate on it as Out of Force

1. The registration of a party list shall be recognized as out of force, if:
 - 1). an application on self-withdrawal has been submitted;
 - 2). the requirement under point eight of Article 18 of this Code has been violated;
 - 3). the requirement under point 7 of Article 25 of this Code has been violated.
2. A party can submit an application on self-withdrawal to the Central Electoral Commission not later than ten days prior to voting.
3. Based on the application on self-withdrawal the registration of the party list is recognized out of force and its electoral deposit, as well as the means left in the pre-election fund are transferred to the state budget.

4. In the event of recognizing the registration of a party list as out of force under point eight of Article 18 and point seven of Article 25, party's electoral deposit and the means left in the pre-election fund are transferred to the state budget.
5. The registration of the candidate on a party list is recognized as out of force, if he/she:
 - 1). has submitted an application on self-withdrawal;
 - 2). has died;
 - 3). the requirement under point eight of Article 18 of this Code has been violated;
 - 4). the requirement under point seven of Article 25 of this Code has been violated;
 - 5). Does not any more have the right to vote.

Article 104: Nomination of Candidates for the National Assembly Deputies by Parties by Majoritarian System

1. Parties registered in the Republic of Armenia have the right to nominate candidates for the National Assembly Deputies by majoritarian system.
2. Parties have the right to nominate one candidate at each constituency.
3. The nomination of candidates by majoritarian system is carried out by the decision of permanently functioning body of the party by secret vote.
4. A party can nominate as a candidate also a person, who is not a party member.

Article 105: Nomination of Candidates for the National Assembly Deputy by Citizens by Majoritarian System

1. At least fifty citizens of the Republic of Armenia who have the right to vote can form an initiative group for the nomination of candidates for the National Assembly deputy by majoritarian system.
2. The initiative group applies in writing to the Regional Electoral Commission with a request for registration, for which, apart from the application, submits the decision of the meeting of the initiative group for the nomination of the candidate for the deputy of the National Assembly, as well as data, in accordance with Article 67 of this Code, on the two plenipotentiary representatives of the initiative group, in the manner prescribed by the law.
3. The decision of the meeting of the initiative group shall contain the family names, first names, dates of birth, identification documents numbers, place of residence, address and signatures of the members of the initiative group.
4. After submitting the necessary documents to the Regional Electoral Commission,

authorized proxies of candidates will be given 2 official papers for support of the nomination of candidate, in compliance with the procedure determined by the Code.

Article 106: Requirements for Nomination of a Candidate for the Deputy of the National Assembly by Majoritarian System

1. The decision of the permanently functioning body of the party and the application (decision) of the initiative group on the nomination of the candidate for the deputy of the National Assembly by majoritarian system shall include the constituency number and the following data on the nominated candidate:
 - 1). family name, first name;
 - 2). year, month and date of birth;
 - 3). place of registered residence;
 - 4). place of work and position (occupation);
 - 5). party affiliation;
 - 6). declaration about his/her private property and his/her and his/her family members' income for the last one year;
 - 7). passport number.
2. Together with the submission to the Regional Electoral Commission of the decisions of the permanently functioning body of the party and of the initiative group on the nomination of the candidate for the deputy of the National Assembly by the majority system, the written statement of the nominated candidate on his/her willingness to be registered in the given constituency shall be submitted.

Article 107: Procedure for Collecting Signatures by Parties and Citizens for Nomination of the National Assembly Candidates by Majoritarian System and the Procedure for Verification of their Validity

In the time frame established by Article 117, parties and citizens receive official papers for the support of the nomination of the National Assembly candidates from the relevant Regional Electoral Commission. For the support of the nomination signatures of at least 500 voters of the given constituency shall be collected for the nomination of the given candidate; the signatures are collected and their validity is verified in accordance with the procedure established by Articles 69-70 of this Code.

Article 108: Registration of Candidates for Deputy of the National Assembly Nominated by the Majoritarian System

1. Candidates for the deputy of the National Assembly nominated by majoritarian system are registered by the decision of the Regional Electoral Commission.
2. At least 45 days prior to the elections to the National Assembly, parties and initiative groups submit to the Regional Electoral Commission for registration of candidates by majoritarian system the following documentation:
 - 1). at least 500 signatures of voters residing in the given constituency, confirming the nomination;
 - 2). receipt on payment of the electoral deposit in the amount of 100 times the amount of the minimum salary;
 - 3). reference on citizenship of the Republic of Armenia for the last five years;
 - 4). reference on permanent residence in the Republic of Armenia during the last five years;

The candidate submits the above-mentioned documentation to the Regional Electoral Commission by himself/herself or through a plenipotentiary representative.

3. In the event of being elected to the National Assembly, as well as receiving more than five per cent of the votes cast, the electoral deposit is paid back.
4. The candidate or his/her plenipotentiary representative or the plenipotentiary representative of the party, which has nominated him/her, has the right to be present at the session of the commission during the consideration of the registration of the nomination of the candidate.

The Regional Electoral Commission denies the registration of the nominated candidate, if:

- 1). the number of valid votes in the official papers for the support of the candidacy after the verification is less than 500;
 - 2). restrictions set forth by this Code extend onto the citizens nominated for the candidate;
 - 3). the documentation submitted for registration are falsified.
5. In the event of an objection about the registration of the citizen nominated for the candidate, the issue is put to vote. The registration is denied with at least two-thirds vote of the total number of the members of the Central Electoral Commission. In the event of no objection - the candidate is considered as registered.
 6. In the event of the denial of the registration of the citizen nominated for the candidate, his/her electoral deposit is paid back.
 7. The Regional Electoral Commission recognizes the registration of the citizen

nominated for the candidate as invalid, if after the registration the following facts have been revealed:

- 1) the restrictions under this Code extend onto the candidate.
- 2) Documents submitted for registration are falsified.

Central Electoral Commission declares the registration of a candidate invalid by at least two-third vote of the total number of its members.

8. In the event of recognizing the registration of the candidate as invalid, his/her electoral deposit and the means left in the pre-election fund are transferred to the state budget.
9. The decision of the Regional Electoral Commission on the denial or recognizing as invalid the registration of the candidate for the deputy can be appealed to court within three days after it has been taken.
10. Based on the judgment of the court on recognizing the decision on the denial or recognition invalid of the registration of the candidate for the deputy unlawful, he/she is recognized as registered or re-registered.

Article 109: Recognition as Out of Force of the Registration of the National Assembly Candidate Nominated by Majoritarian System

The registration of the National Assembly candidate by majoritarian system is recognized as out of force, if he/she:

- 1). has not any more the right to vote;
- 2). has submitted an application on self-withdrawal;
- 3). has died;
- 4). has violated the requirement under point eight of Article 18 of this Code;
- 5). has violated the requirement under point seven of Article 25 of this Code;
2. In the event of recognizing the registration of the candidate nominated for the deputy of the National Assembly by majoritarian system as out of force in the result of his/her death, the electoral deposit is transferred to his/her heirs, and the means left in the pre-election fund are transferred to the state budget.
3. In the event of recognizing the registration of the candidate nominated for the deputy of the National Assembly by majoritarian system out of force under point eight of Article 18 and point seven of Article 25 of this Code the electoral deposit and the means left in the pre-election fund are transferred to the state budget.
4. In the event of recognizing the registration of the candidate nominated for the deputy of the National Assembly by majoritarian system as out of force in the result of losing the voting right, the sum of the electoral deposit is paid back and

the means left in the pre-election fund are transferred to the state budget.

CHAPTER 21.

STATUS OF THE CANDIDATE FOR DEPUTY

Article 110: Equality of the Candidates for National Assembly Deputies

Candidates for deputy have equal rights and responsibilities.

Article 111: Rights, Responsibilities and Guarantees for Activity of the Candidates for National Assembly Deputies

1. Those candidates, who are employees of the state and local self-governing bodies of the Republic of Armenia, are released from the performance of their official duties, from the time of registration until the official announcement of the election results.
2. The candidates are released from call-ups, military service and military training until the official announcement of the election results.
3. The period of time of candidate's running in elections is considered as continuation of his/her professional career.
4. Candidates have the right to withdraw their candidature not later than ten days prior to the election. In the event of the withdrawal of the candidacy the electoral deposit and the means left in the pre-election fund are transferred to the state budget.
5. Parties have the right to withdraw their party lists, as well as withdraw any candidacy registered by the lists by the decision of the permanently functioning body of the party, not later than 10 days prior to the day of voting. That decision is immediately submitted to the Central Electoral Commission. It is forbidden to make any changes in the party electoral lists after the voting is completed.
6. A candidate on the party list can be arrested, subjected to administrative or criminal liability by court order, solely upon the consent of the Central Electoral Commission, and the candidates nominated to the National Assembly by majoritarian system - upon the consent of the Regional Electoral Commission. The Central Electoral Commission and the Regional Electoral Commission take a decision on the above-mentioned issue by at least two-thirds vote of the total number of the members of the commission.

CHAPTER 22.

PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN DURING THE ELECTIONS TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Article 112: The Pre-Election Fund of the Candidate for Deputy and the Party

1. The candidate for the deputy and the party that has nominated an electoral list for the National Assembly proportional elections, for the purpose of conducting pre-election campaign, can establish an pre-election fund on the name of their plenipotentiary representative, which is formed from voluntary contributions set forth in Article 25 of this Code.
2. A candidate has the right to make a contribution to his/her own pre-election fund in the amount 1,000 times the minimum salary of the Republic of Armenia, and a party - in the amount of 2,000 times the minimum salary.
3. Each physical person can make a voluntary contribution to pre-electoral funds of candidates and parties, in the amount of up to fifty times the minimum salary, and each legal person - up to 150 times the minimum salary.
4. During the pre-election campaign a candidate has the right to spend an amount not exceeding 5,000 times the minimum salary, and a party - an amount not exceeding 60,000 times the minimum salary.
5. Candidates for deputies of the National Assembly and parties, registered in the procedure established by this Code to run in the elections of the National Assembly, for the purpose of conducting pre-election campaign have the right to use the means of their pre-election funds only.

Article 113: Pre-Election Campaign

1. The pre-election campaign during the elections to the National Assembly is conducted in accordance with the procedure and time frames set forth in Articles 18-23 of this Code.
2. Parties running in the elections to the National Assembly, in the period of the pre-election campaign enjoy the rights established by Article 81 of this Code.

CHAPTER 23.

BALLOTS, SUMMARIZATION OF THE ELECTION RESULTS

Article 114: Ballots

1. The elections to the National Assembly by the proportional and majoritarian

systems are held with separate ballots.

2. A ballot for the elections to the National Assembly by proportional system contains the names of parties (party alliances) in alphabetical order, as well as the family names and first names of the first three candidates on the list.
3. Ballots for the elections to the National Assembly by proportional system are printed by the order of the Central Electoral Commission. The Central Electoral Commission, through Regional Electoral Commissions allocates the ballots to Precinct Electoral Commissions on the day prior to the day of voting. The ballots shall be of the same colour.
4. A ballot for the elections to the National Assembly by the majoritarian system contains the family names and the first names of the candidates in alphabetical order, according to the family name, and the names of the nominating parties (party alliances), and in the event of civil initiative - the words “Civil initiative”.
5. Ballots for the elections to the National Assembly by majoritarian system are printed by the order of the Regional Electoral Commission. The Regional Electoral Commission allocates the ballots to Precinct Electoral Commissions on the day prior to the day of voting.
6. Ballots shall be of the same colour, and differ from the colour of the ballots mentioned in point two of this Article.
7. The number of ballots allocated shall be five per cent more, than the number of voters on the precinct voter list.

Article 115: Summarization of Results of the National Assembly Proportional Elections

1. The Central Electoral Commission based on the data of the summarization protocols of voting results in the regions, in the procedure and time frames established by Article 63 of this Code summarizes the election results, and takes one of the following decisions:
 - 1). on the election of the deputies of the National Assembly by proportional system;
 - 2). on recognizing the election to the National Assembly by proportional system as invalid;
2. Mandates envisaged for the National Assembly by proportional system are distributed among those party lists, which have received at least five per cent of the total of the number of the votes cast for party lists, running in the elections and the number of inaccuracies. In case only one party has received the five per cent of the total of the number of the votes cast for party lists and the number of inaccuracies, the two parties that have received the next maximum votes

participate in the distribution of the mandates. If up to three parties run in the elections to the National Assembly by proportional system, then all the parties participate in the distribution of mandates.

3. Mandates envisaged for the National Assembly by proportional system are distributed among the party lists - proportional to the votes cast for them. The counting of the mandates to be distributed to each party list is done as follows: the number of votes cast for each list is multiplied by the number of mandates to be allocated to the lists, the result is divided by the total number of votes cast for the lists participating in the distribution of the mandates, and the integer numbers are separated, which are the numbers of mandates to be allocated to each list.
4. The rest of the mandates are distributed among the lists by the magnitude of residuals, on the principle of one mandate to each. In the event of the equality of the magnitude of residuals the disputed mandate is given to the list, which has received the biggest number of "yes" votes. In the event of their equality the matter is settled by drawing a lot.
5. The candidate, whose consecutive number in the list is small or equal to the number of mandates to be allocated to the given list is considered elected by the list.
6. The mandate to be allocated to the candidate elected by proportional system, but who has been also elected by majoritarian system, shall be given to the next candidate on the list.
7. Elections to the National Assembly by proportional system are recognized as invalid, if:
 - 1) Such violations of this Code have taken place during the preparation and conduct of the elections, that could have influenced the election results.
8. Appeals related to disputes over the results of the National Assembly proportional elections can be adjudicated to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia within seven days after the results are officially announced.
9. Re-election will be held not sooner than 10 days and not later than 20 days after the decision on declaration of National Assembly proportional elections invalid comes into force, with the same number of candidates, in compliance with the current Code.

Article 116: Summarization of Results of the National Assembly Majoritarian Elections

1. Based on the data of the summarization protocols of voting, in the procedure and time frames set forth in Article 62 of this Code, the Regional Electoral Commission summarizes the election results by constituencies, and takes one of the following decisions:

- 1). on the election of a deputy;
- 2). on recognizing the elections of the deputies as invalid;
- 3). on recognizing the elections of the deputies as not held;
2. The candidate, who has received the maximum “yes” votes, is considered as elected.
3. In the event if only one candidate runs at the elections, he/she is considered as elected, if he/she has received more than half of the votes of the participants in the elections.
4. In the event if two and more candidates have received maximum equal “yes” votes, drawing is held among them, to determine the elected candidate.
5. The election of the deputies is recognized invalid, if the amount of inaccuracies influencing the number of votes excludes the possibility to determine the elected candidate, if in the course of preparation or conduct of elections such violations of the Code occurred, that might effect the results of elections.
6. The election of a deputy is recognized not held, if:
 - 1). the only candidate running has not received the required number of votes for being elected;
 - 2). the elected candidate has died before the election results have been summarized.
7. Within two hours after the decision on summarization of the election results has been made, the Chairman of the Regional Electoral Commission sends a report to the Central Electoral Commission.
8. Appeals related to disputes over the results of the National Assembly majoritarian elections can be adjudicated to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia within seven days after the results are officially announced.
9. Re-elections will be held not sooner than 10 days and not later than 20 days after the decision on declaration of the election of a candidate invalid comes into force.
10. Re-elections will be held not sooner than 30 and not later than 40 days after the decision on declaration of the election as not held comes into force. Re-elections will be held with new nominations of candidates and within dates determined for the conduct of extraordinary elections.

CHAPTER 24.

ASSIGNMENT AND CONDUCTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Article 117: Time frames for Assignment and Conducting of the National Assembly Regular Elections and for Nomination and Registration of the Candidates

1. Regular elections to the National Assembly are held within 60 days proceeding the end of its authorities.
2. The President of the Republic issues a decree on assignment of regular election, not later than 100 days prior to the day of voting.
3. Parties submit the documents for nomination of candidates for deputies by proportional system to the Central Electoral Commission not later than 61 days prior to the voting day, before 6 PM, and parties receive the official papers for supporting the nomination from Central Electoral Commission not sooner than 65 and not later than 60 days prior to the voting day.
4. The documentation required for registration is submitted to the Central Electoral Commission not later than 45 days prior to the voting day, until 6:00 p.m.
5. The registration of party lists is done not earlier than 45 and not later than 35 days prior to the voting day, until 6:00 p.m.
6. Documentation on nomination of candidates for deputies of National Assembly by majoritarian system is submitted to relevant Regional Electoral Commission not later than 55 days prior to the voting day, before 12 PM, and candidates receive official papers for supporting the nomination from Regional Electoral Commission not sooner than 60 days and not later than 55 days prior to the voting day.
7. The documentation required for registration of candidates is submitted to the Regional Electoral Commission not earlier than 45 days prior to the voting day, until 6:00 p.m.
8. The registration of candidates for deputies of the National Assembly by majoritarian system is done not later than 35 days prior to the voting day, until 6:00 p.m.
9. In the event if official papers of support for one candidate or one party list are submitted in the dates established by points four and seven of this Article, those dates, as well as the dates mentioned in the points five and seven are extended for five days.

Article 118: Assigning and Conducting By-elections of the National Assembly

1. In the event of a vacancy in the National Assembly by the majority system after the regular elections or as a result of early termination of powers of a deputy, by-elections are held at the relevant constituency.
2. By-elections to the National Assembly by majoritarian system are held in the procedure established for regular elections:
 - 1). on the third Sunday in May, if the mandate has been left vacant until the 1st of March;
 - 2). on the third Sunday in October, if the mandate has been left vacant until the 1st of August.
3. In the fourth year of the powers of the National Assembly by-elections by majoritarian system are not held.
4. By the decision of the Central Electoral Commission the mandate of a deputy elected by proportional system, whose term of powers has been pre-terminated, is given to the candidate next on the relevant list, within one week. If there is no other candidate on the party list, the mandate stays vacant.

Article 119: Assigning and Conducting Extraordinary Elections of the National Assembly

1. Extraordinary elections are held not earlier than 30 and not later than 40 days after the dissolution of the National Assembly.
2. The President of the Republic issues a decree on assigning extraordinary elections together with the decree on the National Assembly's dissolution.
3. A party submits the required documentation to the Central Electoral Commission for nomination of candidates to the National Assembly by proportional system, not later than 25 days prior to the election day, until 6:00 p.m.
4. The registration of the party lists is done not earlier than 25 and not later than 20 days prior to the day of voting, until 6:00 p.m.
5. Documentation required for nomination of candidates by majoritarian system is submitted to the Regional Electoral Commission not earlier than 20 and not later than 15 days prior to the election day, until 6:00 p.m.
6. The registration of candidates for the deputy of the National Assembly by majoritarian system is done not earlier than 15 and not later than 10 days prior to the election day, until 6:00 p.m.

PART THREE

CHAPTER 31.

LIABILITY FOR VIOLATIONS OF PROVISIONS OF THIS CODE

Article 139: Liability for Violations of Provisions of This Code

Liability cases, as established by the law, are below:

- 1) Registration in the voter lists in more than one precinct, voting more than once, voting for another person;
- 2) Violation by the community head of the procedures and time frames of compilation of the voter lists;
- 3) Falsification of the official lists of support of the candidates;
- 4) Falsification of the voting results;
- 5) Concealing the ballots, ballot-stuffing;
- 6) Distortion of the elections results on purpose;
- 7) Falsification of ballots and the stamps of the electoral commissions;
- 8) Falsification of protocols on the election and voting results;
- 9) Armed entry into the precinct center (not in the time of professional activities);
- 10) Taking the military in a marching line or with arms
- 11) Hindering the normal operation of the electoral commissions on purpose;
- 12) Election campaigning on the day of the voting and the day prior to it;
- 13) Hindering the free expression of the voters' will;
- 14) Applying forced methods or insulting the member of an electoral commission, observer, proxy, representative of mass media, member of their initiative group;
- 15) Hindering the election-related functions;
- 16) Stealing the ballot boxes;
- 17) Hindering the normal operation of electoral activities by members of the electoral commissions, civil servants, or officers of the local self-governing bodies;
- 18) Coercing the free expression of the voters' will;
- 19) Violating the ballot secrecy;
- 20) Publication of the results of public polls on rating of the candidates during the seven days period prior to the day of voting;
- 21) Tearing off or making graffiti on the election posters posted in specially allocated

for this purpose places;

- 22) Dissemination of false and libeling information about the candidates or parties;
- 23) Deception of the person, incapable of marking the ballot independently;
- 24) Carrying out of pre-election campaign and dissemination of any type of campaign materials by persons and organizations which don't have the right to hold pre-election campaign;
- 25) Hindering the normal process of the pre-election campaign;
- 26) Dissemination of anonymous printed campaign materials;
- 27) Failure to present declaration on the expenditures of the means from the pre-election fund, by candidates and parties, according to the established procedure;
- 28) Not returning the stamps of the electoral commissions;
- 29) Not ensuring equal opportunities for the candidates by the state means of mass media;
- 30) Hindering proxies, observers representatives of mass media to get familiarized with the specimens of ballots, decisions of electoral commissions, not submitting the copies of decisions of Electoral Commissions, or not allowing to make excerpts from them;
- 31) Not filling in or not properly filling in the register of electoral commissions;

THE LAW OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA ON PRESS AND OTHER MASS MEDIA (unofficial translation)

CHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 3. The Principles Guiding the Operation of the Press and Other Mass Media

The press and other mass media shall be guided by the laws of the Republic of Armenia, the principles of equality, humanism, diversity of opinion, tolerance, respect, freedom of conscience and other universal values; they shall promote openness and democracy, freedom of thought, speech and pluralism.

Article 4. The Right to Receive Information

The press and other mass media shall have the right to receive information from any governmental agency, public and sociopolitical organizations and their leaders, unless the release of such information would violate the charter of the organization in question or the provisions of Article 6 of this Law.

The press and other mass media may also receive information from individuals.

Article 6. Unacceptability of Abuse of Freedom of Speech

The press and other mass media shall not be permitted to publish information containing state secrets, a list of which shall be established by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Armenia.

Information which advocates war or violence, incites ethnic and religious hostility, contains propaganda of pornography, drug abuse or other criminal offences as well as false and unverified information shall not be published. Information concerning the secret of adoption or the private life of the citizen shall not be published without the consent of the citizen.

CHAPTER 2. FOUNDATION OF THE PRESS OR OTHER MASS MEDIA, SUSPENSION AND CESSATION OF THEIR OPERATION

Article 11. The Suspension of the Operation of the Press and Other Mass Media

The operation of a printed or other mass medium may be suspended by a decision of its founder; a court may decide to suspend the operation for three months in case the medium has violated Article 6 of this law.

Article 12. The Cessation of the Operation of the Press and Other Mass Media

A printed or other mass medium shall be cease operation for six months if it commits another breach of the law subsequent to a court ruling to suspend its operation.

A printed or other mass medium may cease to operate by the decision of its founder.

CHAPTER 4.

THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A JOURNALIST

Article 26. The Journalist

Under this law, a Journalist is a person who, as his or her lawful occupation, collects, prepares or edits material for a mass medium and who has made a contract with the mass medium or is authorized by another mass medium.

Article 27. The Rights of a Journalist

A journalist has the right to

1. Collect and publish news and information.
2. Refuse to prepare an item if it is contrary to his or her beliefs.
3. Refuse to sign an article he or she has written or other item he or she has prepared if its content has been distorted by the editor or the editorial board.
4. Make sound recordings, photograph, videotape, or record by other media unless prohibited to do so by law.
5. Be present, after presenting his press card, at conventions, demonstrations, other events, trials and scenes of natural disaster, as provided by law.
6. Use a pen name.

It is illegal to interfere with the journalist's compliance with his or her professional obligations,

Article 28. The Duties of a Journalist

A journalist has the duty to

1. Comply with the law and the charter and guidelines of the editorial board that he or she works for.

2. Report verified reliable information.
3. If the need arises, reveal the name of the persons that provided the information, or its source if the information is being published for the first time.
4. Keep the editor informed of unverified facts and information, the publication of which may violate the provisions of Article 6 of this Law.

Article 29. The Accreditation of a Journalist

Mass media, upon prior consent, may accredit their journalist with state and public organizations. A journalist accredited by an organization shall have the right to observe the work of the organization and to report on it.

Foreign journalists shall apply for accreditation to the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Armenia. The Ministry may withdraw a foreign journalist's credentials if he or she violates the Constitution or the laws of the Republic of Armenia.

THE LAW OF REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA “ON TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTING”

(unofficial translation)

CHAPTER 2.

THE ORGANIZATION OF BROADCASTING

Article 11. Television and Radio Programs During Referendums and Elections

In the period preceding referendum and pre-election campaigns and in the duration of such campaigns, television and radio programs shall be broadcast according to the legislation on elections and referenda.

During the above-mentioned period, it is illegal to broadcast political or any other campaign materials in the form of news, editorials, documentaries, columns or other programs. Any pre-election campaign should be broadcast on television with the “Political Advertisement” or “Pre-election Campaign” subtitle constantly appearing on the screen. In the case of radio programs, the fact that the program is part of a pre-election campaign should be mentioned at least three times during each program.

During referendum and pre-election campaigns, television and radio broadcasting companies shall publicly inform about their rates for airtime for political advertisement and other campaign materials. Everyone shall use the paid airtime based on contracts, and the conditions shall be the same for everyone.

CHAPTER 3.

TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTING COMPANIES

Article 24.

Unacceptability of Abuse of Television and Radio Programs

It is forbidden to use the television and radio programs for the following:

- a) Calls for a violent takeover of power, a violent change or overthrow of the Constitutional order;
- b) Instigation of ethnic, religious or racial hostility or conflict;
- c) Divulgence of state or other secrets protected by the law;
- d) War propaganda;
- e) Encouragement of criminal offences or other acts prohibited by law;

- f) Dissemination of pornography;
- g) Broadcasting programs that advocate violence or cruelty, humiliate human dignity and have a negative impact on the education of minors;
- h) Libel, violation of the rights and of the presumption of innocence of other persons.

Exceptions may be made for the use and broadcasting of historical documentaries. Erotic programs and horror films may be broadcast from 12 p.m. until 6 a.m. Exceptions may be made for encoded programs.

Article 26. The Consumer's Rights with Respect to Access to Information

Information is accessible to all consumers unless a television or radio company has restricted the access to information through encoding or otherwise, or has announced the information to be restricted.

In cases when a television or radio company broadcasts to an unlimited number of consumers and provides information free of charge, the consumer has the right to use the service free of charge without prior notice to the broadcasting company. In other cases the price and the conditions for the service are described in the contract.

PARTIES RUNNING FOR THE ELECTION AND THEIR PROGRAMS

ARMENIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT (ANM)

Established: August 19, 1988

First congress held November 4-6, 1989

Membership: 6,500

Ruling body: Board, elected by Congress

Board Chairman: Ararat Zurabian

Deputy Chairmen: Aram Manukian, Khachatur Kokobelian

Executive Secretary: Andranik Hovakimian /tel. 56 88 12/

Candidates: 41

Branches: 45

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

Independent statehood is the supreme priority of the nation. The principle function of the state is to provide security, protect the interests of its citizens and ensure their prosperity. Rule of law and legality guarantee an effectively governed strong state. The law must protect democratic standards and fundamental freedoms. Civil society should be formed via broadening the authority of local self-management agencies and widening the scope of NGO activity.

- **Foreign policy**

Relying on a third power or choosing a concrete political orientation has no place in foreign policy. The concepts of ‘eternal friend’ or ‘eternal enemy’ are incompatible with statehood. The state should not put forward or implement policies that do not serve the interests of its citizens or are not feasible. Armenia should establish mutually beneficial relations with other countries and solve arising problems only via political dialogue, proceeding from mutual interest. The establishment and preservation of stable peace is a priority issue. To this end, Armenia should become involved in all regional security initiatives.

- **Karabagh**

Since the day of its establishment, the ANM has considered the Karabagh issue a matter of free self-determination. The party has borne the whole weight of the Karabagh movement both during the rise of the liberation struggle and during the years of governing. Armenian authorities should not replace the issue of self-determination by negotiations in terms of territorial claims. Nagorno-Karabagh must have the status of party in conflict and negotiations. Bilateral negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan should be shifted to a format where Karabagh will be actively involved as conflict party. Mutual concessions should be agreed upon only on the consent of the parties, i.e. Karabagh and Azerbaijan. The only acceptable solution proposed up to date is the 'stage by stage' project.

- **Diaspora**

Homeland-Diaspora relations should be based on respect of each other's status. Armenia must not interfere with the life of any Armenian Diaspora community; the Diaspora must not interfere with Armenia's domestic problems or dictate a certain policy. Based on such relations, only mutual support can yield positive results. Armenia should foster the preservation of Armenian identity in the Diaspora, and the latter can make its contribution to the development of the homeland.

- **Economic policy**

Free and transparent economy secures development. All forms of property should have the same legal status and be equally protected by law. All state-run enterprises should be privatized; the state must have as little control over economic entities as possible. A low-risk field should be secured for investments. Special attention should be attached to the scientific and technical potential, development of modern technology. Monopolies should be eliminated; economic legislation should be reformed and simplified.

- **Social sector**

Measures for social protection must be based on economic growth and rule of law. Failing this, any promises of social welfare are false promises.

- **Science & education**

Preservation and development of the scientific potential is a priority factor for building a strong Armenian state and ensuring the welfare of its citizens. Special attention should be attached to humanities and culture. Concrete domestic, foreign and economic policy will attract investments to technical and applied science. Public education should be free of political ideology. Armenian should be the main language of teaching; foreign languages should also be encouraged.

ARMENIAN RENEWED COMMUNIST PARTY (ARCP)

Established: May 25, 2002

Membership: 10,000

Ruling body: Central Committee /elected at Congress/

First Secretary: Yuri Manoukyan

Branches: 31 branches and 200 clubs

Candidates: 44

Media arm: *Khosq bazmatc* (People's voice) newspaper

Contact: Robert Aharonyan (tel.: 53 12 14, 48 22 87)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

Rehabilitation of the social system, measures for country's economic, political and cultural revival, social justice. ARCP welcomes all the measures aimed at establishing peace in the region.

ARCP is cooperating with those parties that serve the interests of workers and of the majority of Armenian citizens.

- **Foreign policy**

Further development of economic, cultural and political relations with Russia, establishing mutually beneficial economic relations with other countries. One of Armenia's main goals is to enter the Russia-Belarus union. To this end, we must become involved in all regional security initiatives.

- **Diaspora**

ARCP encourages further development and strengthening of relations with Diaspora, works to protect the rights of Armenia's ethnic minorities.

- **Economy**

ARCP goals include the creation of thousands of new jobs and reactivating industrial enterprises. The party intends to provide each citizen with a paid job, reduce poverty and migration.

Even given the current social and economic hardships, it's possible to solve the following issues:

- Periodically estimate minimum subsistence needs and provide a minimum subsistence level of 20,000 drams for each Armenia citizen starting January, 2004. Subsequently this amount must be adjusted to the inflation rates of the Armenian dram.
- Reimburse the savings of the Armenian savings bank depositors from 2004 on.
- Calculate the minimal salary based on minimum subsistence needs.
- Double students' scholarships
- Fix tariffs for electricity at 16 drams for 1kW/h
- Halve prices for drinking and irrigation water as well as tariffs on land and provide free irrigation of frontier areas.

- **Social sector**

Ensure adequate social conditions for all families; offer state benefits to intelligentsia and culture sphere workers; provide social support to veterans and the disabled; take proper steps to restore free education and healthcare; continue the process of providing refugees and earthquake victims with jobs and apartments; form a society where all citizens are equal before the law, regardless of status or official position.

- **Science & education**

The state must ensure the development of science, culture and education. The law must establish the right to compulsory secondary education. The state should ensure adequate quality of university education, control educational programs and provide adequate equipment to schools.

BAGREVAND

Established: February 26, 2003

Membership: 5,000

Ruling body: Executive Board comprised of 19 members elected at Congress

Chairman: Kamo Petrosian

Secretary: Gevorg Hambarian /Tel. 27 24 89, 27 43 27, 27 29 06/

Candidates: 30

Branches: Kotayk, Aragatsotn, Ararat, Gegharkunik, Armavir, Vayots Dzor, Shirak & Yerevan

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
.....• **Domestic policy**

Our priorities are reducing social polarization, protecting national interests, respect for national minority rights, creation of a strong, national, social and legal state based on justice and humanity.

• **Foreign policy**

Balanced, friendly relations with neighboring countries, consistent policy for strengthening peace. Assisting the strengthening of Armenian Diaspora communities.

• **Karabagh issue**

Enhance Karabagh self-defense structures; ensure the security of the population. Develop the economy of Nagorno-Karabagh with the help of Armenians worldwide. Resolve the social-economic problems of Karabagh and reduce emigration by developing trade and economic ties with Karabagh as a priority.

• **Diaspora**

Diaspora Armenians should be given residence permits.

Use Diaspora's potential for achieving pro-Armenian decisions in international agencies, particularly concerning the recognition of the genocide.

• **Economy**

Create a developed and competitive economy. Implement consistent tax and customs policies for boosting home production. Cut down credit rates; give long-

term loans. The foreign policy should add to the development of the economy.

- **Social**

Elaborate the legislation regulating social and primary healthcare services.

- **Education, science & culture**

Create conditions to fully realize Armenian scientific and spiritual potential. Reform the education sector. Adjust higher education to international standards. Secure the development of industry and agriculture based on scientific results. Increase the role of the state in the cultural sphere. Reconstruct cultural monuments.

CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATIC

Established: 1990

Registered by the Ministry of Justice as the first political party of Armenia

Founder: Azat Arshakyan

Membership: 500

Ruling body: Political Board comprised of 9 members, elected at Congress held every 5 years

Chairman: Khosrov Harutunyan (tel. 54 37 87)

Deputy Chair: Anaida Martirosyan (cell. 09 43 47 84)

Candidates: 33

Branches: in Ararat, Aragatsotn and Shirak provinces

Contact: Suren Baghdasaryan, press secretary (tel. 54 11 33; cell. 09 45 94 65)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Domestic policy**

Justice and moral virtue. Revival of justice and morality. Creation of conditions for decent life and welfare of the citizens. The dignity of the country depends on the dignity of every citizen.

Democracy, from our point of view, is a vital and excellent way to comprehensive human development. Participation of each citizen in public life and decision-making is an essential element of democracy.

- **Role of the state**

The state serves the nation through its institutions. Its main functions are social, moral and protective. Any power must serve individuals. This means no state has the right to violate the fundamental rights or freedoms of a person or the society in order to retain power.

- **Political modernization**

The creation of a political system, transparent, predictable and at the same time strong, which can strengthen and multiply democratic traditions. Political parties must become truly political.

De-criminalize politics, increase government responsibility, establish a system of checks and balances between the Parliament and the President.

- **Legal system**

Minimum participation of law enforcement bodies in social and economic activity, reducing their authority, implementation of structural and legislative changes. Liberate the court system from the control of executive power in accordance with international legal norms.

- **Foreign policy**

Changing priorities and initiatives. In our opinion, EU membership and full integration into European community can provide further freedom and independence, progress and solidarity. Armenia must become a full-fledged responsible member of the EU, European political and security systems.

Foster cooperation with European political, economic and cultural institutions, develop relations with European countries.

Positive relations with neighboring countries can guarantee the security and development of Armenia. Armenia should develop mutually beneficial cooperation with Georgia and Iran and make continuous efforts aimed at settling the conflict with Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Considering the fact that development of democratic traditions and principles in the countries of the region will promote solution of present historical and political problems and conflicts, Armenia must support and maintain the process of democratization of the region's countries and their integration into the civilized world community.

While strengthening and widening its strategic and comprehensive partnership with USA and Russia, Armenia should be aware of the benefits of these relations and make sure that US and Russia do not build up their influence in the region at the cost of Armenia's interests.

- **Karabagh issue**

The maintenance of the current 'no war, no peace' situation against the risk of renewed military action jeopardizes the national security of Armenia and put its achievements and progress at stake. Efforts to resolve the Karabagh conflict must be such as to avoid war at any cost and prepare steps for mutual confidence and peaceful coexistence between parties in conflict. We will accept any solution provided it guarantees free and secure development of Karabagh Armenians.

- **Economy**

The CDU opts for market economy and strengthening the social balance. Based on market economy, our national economy should effectively develop according

to the needs of the society. Economy is not an end in itself but the means to serve society built upon freedom, responsibility and solidarity.

Provide free economic competition free from pressure on the part of the government, monopolies, criminal or advocacy groups.

- **Social sector**

Struggle against unemployment; create equal opportunities for men and women; enable involvement of the disabled and disadvantaged in public life; support children and family; provide healthcare services to wider strata of society.

- **Science, culture & education**

Cultural policy is based on freedom of religion, public initiative and ideological pluralism.

Cultural policy must be oriented toward various intellectual and spiritual traditions that, merged with numerous influences, form the national culture. National culture must be integrated into the cultural life of the European community and be linked to European traditions. Armenian science and education must be closer to European traditions while preserving local values.

In the global information era, it is culture, science and education that determine development. Sustained economic growth is only possible if the country has a high-skilled educated workforce and the cultural atmosphere promotes the development of science and education.

With accelerating globalization, the decreasing role of the state and mounting influence of society and personality, the education system is subject to individualization and internationalization. National education is viable to the extent that it meets international standards.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF ARMENIA

Established: 1920

Membership: 50,000

Ruling body: Central Committee /elected by congress/

First Secretary: Vladimir Darbinian

Second Secretary: Sanatruk Sahakian

Candidates: 39

Branches: in all marzes of Armenia

Media arms: *Hayastani Komunist* /Armenian Communist, in Armenian/ and *Pravda Armenii* /Truth of Armenia, in Russian/ daily newspapers

Contact: tel. 54 19 17, 56 79 33

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

Creating a government trusted by the people. Initiate essential amendments of the Constitution aimed at limiting the authority of the President, increasing the authority and widening the functions of legislative and executive branches of government. Creating a stronger system of human rights and civil freedoms, achieving multi-partisan democracy. Propose a new draft constitution which will secure ultimate human rights and freedoms, establish an authority of workers that will express the interests of the majority.

- **Foreign policy**

Larger involvement of the parliament in choosing, elaborating and implementing foreign policy goals. Further development of military-political partnership and full restoration of cultural ties with Russia. Aiming at membership in Russia-Belarus union, start negotiations with the legislative authorities of these countries. Promote multilateral relations with friendly countries having common geopolitical and economic interests with Armenia, among them Iran, China, Syria, Georgia, Greece, Cyprus and Lebanon.

- **Karabagh issue**

Continue peace talks aimed at resolving the Karabagh conflict based on the right of nations to self-determination. We believe that the only fair solution is for Karabagh to become a separate and equal CIS member state. Draft legislative mechanisms for further economic integration of Armenia and Karabagh.

- **Economy**

All forms of property should coexist but the state ownership should be superior. Industrial enterprises of strategic importance should be nationalized, turned into joint stock companies, with companies from Russia or other CIS countries as their shareholders. This will secure the quick re-launch of those enterprises. Protect the domestic market; make fundamental changes in investment and customs policies. Cut taxing of leading industries while at the same time increasing taxing of banking and broker services. Draft a state program for rehabilitation of industrial production, including the use of modern technology, reestablishment of traditional economic and technical ties and export of competitive goods to CIS markets. Ban sale and purchase of land, free peasants from taxes for two years, give long-term credits to farmers, especially residents of frontier and highland villages. Review and decrease prices for irrigation water, supply free water to some areas.

- **Social policy**

Reestablish social justice and equality. Via constitutional reforms, restore people's right to work and leisure. By regular indexation, raise salaries, pensions and allowances to a level which will secure people with minimum necessary living conditions, and subsequently attempt to reach the real minimum consumer basket. Implement a consistent policy for creating a free state-managed healthcare system, while allowing paid services to exist as well. Provide state support to families, mothers, children and the elderly.

Elaborate a law on social-psychological rehabilitation of the disaster-zone population, give citizenship to Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan, secure their social-economic protection. Draft a law stipulating the return of savings that the Armenian citizens had deposited in Armenian savings bank prior to 1991.

- **Science, education and culture**

State support to education, compulsory secondary and free higher education for all social strata. Continuation and restoration of the traditional Soviet education system. Give cultural heritage sites such as the Opera and Ballet Theater, the Matenadaran, the Byurakan astrological observatory, Yerevan State University, Institute of Physics etc. the status of sites of national importance. Raising retirement pensions and the wages of persons employed in sports, culture, science and education, and the wages of military servicemen.

ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION (DASHNAKTSUTYUN) (ARFD)

Established: 1890

Membership: 7000 (in Armenia)

Ruling body: Executive Council of Armenia

Representative of Executive Council: Armen Rustamyan

Candidates: 101

Branches: in all marzes of Armenia

Media arm: *Yerkir* weekly

Contact: Gegham Manoukyan (tel. 52 15 01)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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• **Domestic policy**

The Republic of Armenia is the motherland of all Armenians and the protector of their interests. The Armenian state must be built upon democracy combined with strong executive power. It is necessary to restore state's active role in promoting genuine public values alongside the active participation of the community. Unless all political forces of the country participate in political life, it is impossible to achieve democracy. The key condition is the natural development of state institutions.

One of the fundamental elements of Armenian statehood is the idea of a social state based on constitutional provisions. It means that the aim of state policy both in economic and social spheres is welfare, fair and rational income redistribution aimed at securing adequate living standards for poor families.

• **Foreign policy**

Armenia has adopted an interactive and complementary foreign policy.

In its foreign policy, Armenia should give priority to integration into Europe. Implementation and preservation of current priorities is a strategic objective.

The recognition of the Armenian genocide shall remain one of the major elements of foreign policy.

• **Karabagh issue**

One of the main goals of the Republic of Armenia and of all Armenians is to strengthen the legal status and security of Nagorno-Karabagh. The Karabagh conflict must be resolved through peace talks aimed at the recognition of Karabagh

independence both *de facto* and *de jure*.

- **Diaspora**

Homeland-Diaspora relationship should be based on mutually beneficial ties. To this end, the Constitution must be amended so as to provide the right to dual citizenship. The rights and duties of individuals with dual citizenship have to be specified. Proceeding from the concept of Armenian national unity, the Armenian state should assume protection of Armenians' interests worldwide and serve as a link between Armenians all over the globe.

- **Economy**

Economic policy must be based on the idea of social prosperity. Aiming at large-scale modernization, a favorable environment for investments and entrepreneurship must be created. Predictable tax and credit policy and structural rebuilding of economy are also necessary. Only rapid development of national capital and the creation of favorable conditions can attract investments to Armenia. It is also expedient to strengthen and protect private property.

- **Social sector**

Social reforms must provide social justice and sustainability, combat social inequality.

Social reforms have to pursue the following goals:

- 1) To provide social protection to vulnerable strata of society, as these have no capacity to solve their problems and need state support.
- 2) To provide availability of basic social services for the whole population (primarily healthcare and secondary education).
- 3) To provide the able-bodied part of community with conditions appropriate for increasing incomes and improving living conditions. To guarantee the increase of minimal wages and pensions.

- **Science & education**

The educational system should ensure high professional levels and educate citizens in the spirit of patriotism and humanism. The state should guarantee education system development as a factor of strengthening statehood.

A high scientific and technical potential is one of the factors of independence and national security.

The supreme objective of the state is to encourage cultural life and preserve the cultural heritage.

DEMOCRATIC LIBERAL UNION OF ARMENIA /DLU/

Founded: October 6, 2001

Membership: 21,259

Ruling body: Political Board /elected by vote/

Chairman: Seyran Avagyan

Candidates: 70

Branches: 56

Media arm: *Zham* weekly

Contact: Baghdasar Mheryan /tel. 56 05 26, cell. 09 40 16 64/

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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• **Domestic policy**

Strong local self-management, the self-organization of society for the purpose of protecting its own rights and freedoms, pluralism, freedom to receive information, free choice of political and economic lifestyle, multi-form equal ownership. All these will pave the road to social accord. A strong society requires a strong middle class. In this case, Armenia will become a country where civil society ensures the protection of democratic principles. The party believes that the authorities should embark on a dialogue with the public based on concept that ‘public opinion is good for everybody’. Power branches should be independent from each other; everyone shall be equal in front of law and court. Judicial structures must be independent from other state agencies. The Constitution is the supreme law, which protects human rights and freedoms, equality of rights and unacceptability of discrimination, guarantees free economic competition, and directs state resources to the social system. Everyone should get high quality education and medical service. We must guarantee jobs and adequate wages. Our party chooses the democratic path of development of Armenia.

• **Foreign policy**

Balanced friendly relations with neighbors, international recognition of the genocide, a flexible policy adjusted to current globalization tendencies, integration into the world community and European development processes.

• **Karabagh issue**

Either the unification of Nagorno-Karabagh with Armenia or the recognition of

its independent status by the international community. Participation of Karabagh authorities in the drafting of solutions. Ensuring the security of Karabagh by agreeing on a final peace borderline with Azerbaijan. No territory of Armenia can become the object of bargaining in the framework of negotiations, nor can any communication corridor violate the territorial integrity of Armenia.

- **Diaspora**

Furthering bilateral relations, cooperation on national identity preservation and economic issues, coordination of investments.

- **Economy**

Support to small and medium businesses, creation of venture funds and insurance companies, flexible credit policy.

- **Social**

Support the emergence of a middle class, addressing the causes of corruption, combating poverty, fixing the minimum pension and salary rate at 10, 000 AMD.

- **Science and education**

Lively contacts between different branches of science, an emphasis on modern technology, introduction of modern technologies in education and furnishing education institutions with modern equipment. Reforms of the education system aimed at helping students to choose in which fields to major.

DIGNITY, DEMOCRACY, MOTHERLAND UNION

Comprised of: National Democratic Party (NDP) and Dignified Future Party (DFP)

Founded: March 13, 2003, at joint session of the two parties' leaderships

Candidates: 71

National Democratic Party (NDP)

Membership: 8,780

Ruling body: Board, elected at congress

Chairman: Gagik Aslanian, Vice-Speaker of National Assembly

Dignified Future Party (DFP)

Membership: 5,270

Ruling body: political board elected at Congress

Chairwoman: Lyudmila Haroutiunian, Head of Sociology Chair at Yerevan State University

Branches: in all provinces, major cities and Yerevan.

Contact: Artak Chagharyan, spokesman (tel. 52 74 52. 53 05 68)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

Our priority is responsibility and morality in domestic political life and the formation of a united society and an organized state. We opt for a constructive opposition that keeps its activities within constitutional norms. The union is against leftist or rightist radicalism. The union's activity will be based on responsibility towards the present and future of the country, the state and the people.

- **Foreign policy**

A new place and role for Armenia in the region. Pursuing the Armenian Cause and working for international recognition of the genocide. Active involvement of Armenia into international and particularly regional economic, political and cultural structures.

- **Karabagh issue**

Quick resolution of the conflict aimed at international recognition of Nagorno-Karabagh, and, in the long term, its unification with Armenia.

- **Diaspora**

Integrate Armenian economy into world markets by using the financial potential and experience of the Diaspora. Set up a state agency for dealing with Diaspora issues. This agency shall be independent from other state agencies, and will cooperate with the state agency that coordinates foreign economic relations.

Create a national information center that will raise awareness among Diaspora about the economic, political, cultural and social life of homeland. Achieve a prosperous homeland for and with Armenians worldwide.

- **Economy**

Planned rather than ad hoc development of economy. Cutting down shadow economy. Place priority on meeting the demands of people. Achieve this purpose by thoroughly analyzing the potential of all economic entities and finding a consensus for group and personal interests.

- **Social**

Our priorities are the transition from survival to development and reform, from 'residual' to social-democratic principles. This is possible to achieve if we base all activities on social justice and accord.

- **Science and Education**

Create favorable conditions for science and education development via state programs. Larger financing of the sector, promotion of young scientists and educators, more support from the state. Clarify the status of educational institutions, introduce the same standards for all. Increase educators' salaries. Guarantee stable development of educational systems, free secondary education.

THE FIST OF ARMENIAN BRAVES

Established: 2002

Membership: 10,000

Ruling body: Board (elected at General Assembly held once in 2 years)

Chairman: Razmik Vasilyan

Candidates: 19

Branches: in all marzes

Contact: Armen Avetisyan (cell. 09 43 13 74)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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• **Domestic policy**

Balance public and state levers, form a genuine national mentality. Promote tolerance between pro-governmental organizations and political opposition.

Launch economic, scientific and cultural activity in Karabagh and the liberated territories, implement effective settlement policy.

Help the ethnic minorities of Armenia to preserve their national features. Joint projects with friendly nations are a priority.

• **Foreign policy**

Be firmly guided by Armenia's and Armenians' interests. Simultaneously with membership in various international agencies, establish serious and close ties with neighboring states. Form new strategic, political and economic alliances. Review approaches to solving the issue of Karabagh and the liberated territories. Review the status of Javakhk, protect the interests of Javakhk Armenians, pursue the Armenian Cause, discuss the problems of Nakhijevan and Nakhijevani Armenians. Work for international recognition of the Armenian genocide.

• **Economy**

Review tax, customs, credit, bank and investment policies. Regulate the relationship between state-owned and private businesses. Promote free market activity and turnover in a way that will not harm the state. Specify a list of enterprises of strategic importance and prevent their monopolistic exploitation. Plan industrial and agricultural development based on realistic estimates of domestic raw materials, manpower, scientific and technical potential. Revive and modernize

Armenian traditional trades. Combat migration, systematize emigration. Combat illegal export of money or national heritage.

- **Social sector**

Social equality is a priority. Ensure social protection of the society, especially retired or disabled people, war veterans, disadvantaged families, young people.

Promote formation of moral, traditional large families. Draft a program to create new jobs, regulate salaries and pensions.

- **Science, culture & education**

Nationalize and modernize education, healthcare, language and science. Create of adequate conditions for employees in these spheres. Ensure the development of Armenian culture, art and sport; combine traditional Armenian and international cultural values. Preserve the historical and cultural identity of our values. Reorganize e and improve the education system.

JUSTICE BLOC

Comprised of: People's Party of Armenia, Democratic Party of Armenia, National Democratic Party, National Democratic Union

Candidates: 137

People's Party of Armenia /PPA/

Established: June 15, 1998

Membership: 30,000

Ruling body: Board /elected at Congress/

Chairman: Stepan Demirchian /elected at Congress/

Secretaries: Stepan Zakarian, Grigor Haroutiunian, V. Mkrtchian

Branches: 53 regional offices and 1,200 clubs

Contact: Ruzan Khachatryan, press secretary /tel.: 53 89 81, 53 15 01/

Democratic Party of Armenia

Founded: September 18, 1991

Membership: 9,757 /according to party list/

Ruling body: Central Board, elected by Congress

Chairman: Aram Sargsian /elected by Congress/

Branches: in all marzes of Armenia

Contact: Haik Esayan, Deputy Chairman /phone: 52 52 73/

National Democratic Party

Founded: May 25, 2001

Membership: 250

Ruling body is elected at Congress

Chairman: Shavarsh Kocharian

Branches: Yerevan, Ararat & Syunik marzes

Contact: Dustrik Mkhitarian /tel. 23 72 11/

National Democratic Union

Founded: May 19, 2001

Membership: 700

Ruling body: Board

Chairman: Arshak Sadoyan

Secretary: Norik Eghiazarian

Branches: cities Gyumri, Artashat

Contact: Vardan Grigorian /tel. 58 75 47/

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
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- **Domestic policy**

Winning the parliamentary elections is a legal way of restoring the constitutional right and establishing democratic values in the country. The ‘Justice’ bloc was formed for this purpose. Uniting the country’s opposition forces, the bloc brings the society together for the purpose of combating illegality and physical harassment and establishing justice and democracy.

The party will pursue the establishment of a truly independent legislative body that will be a weighty political agency, not an appendix of the executive powers. The bloc has a concrete program for combating corruption and proposes strict punishment for any manifestation of bribery. Our priority is to address all the social and economic roots of corruption.

- **Foreign policy**

Armenia should react to regional tendencies adequately and rapidly. After 5 years of uncertainty, Armenia should at last choose which structure of regional security to join. Russia should be given privilege as a strategic partner, yet we must not underestimate regional geopolitical developments involving the NATO and other international organizations.

- **Karabagh issue**

Karabagh should have the status of a full-fledged party in the negotiations. Mutual concessions aimed at conflict management may by no means affect the territorial integrity of Armenia. Negotiations will determine the scope and form of concessions. The resolution of the Karabagh conflict is directly linked to regional integration.

- **Diaspora**

In order to increase the role of the Diaspora in the homeland, we must review and realistically assess the steps undertaken in this direction up to date. We need to reveal the factors that hamper effective cooperation with the Diaspora and elaborate a detailed program of economic integration.

- **Economy**

Imposing property tax on disused privatized enterprises in order to promote their reactivation via creating unfavorable conditions for their inactivity. Support and encourage reactivated enterprises by giving them tax privileges and long-term credits. Make extensive use of the country’s natural and labor resources.

- **Social**

Parallel to increasing the efficiency of the economy, pay back debts to Armenian depositors who had savings in Armenian savings bank and lost them after the collapse of the USSR. Provide more free medical services and education, increase pensions and wages of state employees.

- **Science & education**

It is necessary to use scientific achievements in the home industry, to offer state support to theoretical and Armenian studies. Identify and support talented young people. The youth must see its future in the homeland and be sure that its knowledge and skills are appreciated and useful in Armenia.

JUSTICE PARTY

Established: August 24, 1999

Membership: 300 /mostly youth/

Ruling body: Congress

Candidates: 10

Chairman: Arthur Baloyan

Principles:

1. **Justice**, the equality of possibilities
2. **Morality**, the norm for any activity
3. **Legality**, the guarantee of civilization
4. **Freedom**, the precondition for the development of any sphere of public life
5. **Harmony** between and within generations
6. Democracy
7. **Stability** in politics and society
8. **Traditionalism**, the practice of the best part of our heritage
9. **Social Progress**, the way to national prosperity

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

Establish and strengthen political cooperation, improve the legal field, promote democratization based on a new value system, protect human rights, build a strong civil society.

- **Foreign policy**

Work for sustained peace in region.

Development of economic and political ties with neighbor states, integration into regional and international organizations, further cooperation with Europe, propagation of Armenia's international prestige with the help of the Diaspora.

Emphasize international recognition of genocide.

- **Karabagh**

Reach peaceful solution of the conflict, international recognition of Karabagh state and sustained stability within the framework of OSCE Minsk group.

- **Diaspora**

Creation of favorable atmosphere for cooperating with the Diaspora in education, science, culture, sports, business and other spheres.

Support Diaspora communities, help preserve Armenian identity worldwide.

- **Economy**

Draft a strategic program for economic development with stress on the social component. Create conditions for the involvement of younger-generation Diaspora Armenians in Armenian economy.

- **Social**

Ensure adequate social conditions for Armenian citizens, pay special attention to the disabled and elderly.

- **Education, science & culture**

Ensure strong ties between education, science and production. Provide free secondary education. Set up state and private mechanisms for financing university education. Increase state responsibility towards education, science, culture and sports.

LABOR, LAW, UNITY

Established: October 28, 2001

Membership: 1000

Ruling body: Political Board /elected by party congress for a 3-year term/

Board Chairman: Miran Movsesian

Deputy Chairman: Zhulver Khachatrian

Candidates: 13

Branches: cities Yerevan, Vanadzor, Stepanavan, Odzun, Ararat, Masis, Meghri, Artik, Gyumri

Media arm: *Anveher* weekly

Contact: Nazenik Chorekian /tel. 53 49 87/

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
.....• **Domestic policy**

Reform the state structure, distinguish and identify the duties and responsibilities of power branches.

Secure the control of society over the government; undertake steps limiting bureaucracy and abuse of power.

Give larger authority to local self-management bodies, ensure the transparency of power structures.

• **Foreign policy**

The goal is to strengthen security, add to regional stability and long-term peace, deepening friendly relations with neighboring states. Russia is a strategic partner; Armenia should strengthen relations with other CIS countries.

Further integration into European community via strengthening ties with UN, EU, Council of Europe, and the US. Foreign policy should be complementary and built on equal partnership. International recognition of the Armenian genocide is a priority.

• **Karabagh issue**

The issue should be solved based on the principle of Armenia's territorial integrity, no land concessions should be made by Armenia. A final solution should be made only on the consent of the populations of Karabagh and Armenia.

- **Economy**

Support the development of agriculture via legislative reforms. Support peasants using all possible means, including stable supply of irrigation water, fertilizers and equipment. Give certain privileges to frontier village residents in order to improve the social conditions in these settlements & encourage re-settlement. Take steps to eliminate the clan system in economic and political spheres. Encourage investments in economy by adopting favorable legislation, support home industrialists and farmers. Combat monopolization and violations committed by monopolists. Develop small-to-medium businesses via effective legal reforms, which will ease the social polarization of the population and promote the formation of a middle class. Encourage the launch of privatized but idle enterprises. Support development of modern technology.

- **Social sector**

Practical steps aimed at cutting unemployment, promotion of small and medium businesses. Solve social problems of war veterans. Give special privileges to young families and families with many children. Undertake measures to reduce emigration and encourage repatriation.

- **Science and education**

Promote introduction of international education standards, modern programs and technologies. Draft a pan-national strategic development program and follow its provisions. Supply frontier village schools with competitive educators. Support scientific research and use its results in the economy.

Armenia has the potential to become a regional scientific, educational and intellectual center. Promote individual and public creative potential, preservation of historical and cultural heritage of Armenia.

Further cultural cooperation with foreign countries and the Diaspora. Support cultural achievements and people who represent Armenian culture in foreign countries.

LIBERAL UNION

Comprised of: Self Determination Union, Intellectual Armenia and Azat Hayk Arakelutyun /Free Armenia Mission/

Candidates: 137

Self Determination Union

Founded: 1987

Membership: around 7,000

Ruling body: chairman and Divan (comprised of 12 members)

Chairman is elected at meetings of the ruling bodies in the provinces. Divan members are elected by envoys chosen at the meetings /3-4 envoys from each marz/.

Chairman: Parouyr Hayrikian

Deputy Chairman: Hagop Yumushadian

Divan Spokesman: Arkady Vardanyan

Branches: in all marzes and Yerevan /each marz office has its chairman and board /5-7 members/

Media arm: *Ankakhutyun* journal

Contact: Syuzanna Manvelian, secretary /tel. 56 29 16/

Intellectual Armenia

Founded: May 25, 1994

Membership: 326

Ruling body elected at Congress of the party's Political Board

Chairman: Hovhannes Tokmajian

Branches: in 8 marzes of Armenia

Contact: Armen Khojoyan /tel. 42 58 55/

Azat Hayk Arakelutyun (Free Armenia Mission)

Founded: 1990

Registered: 1998

Ruling body: board elected at general meeting

Chairman: Ruben Mnatsakanian

Branches: in all marzes

Contact: Ruben Mnatsakanian /tel. 45 73 08/

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
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- **Domestic policy**

Genuine democracy is a priority. Our slogan is ‘the country is for the people’. Only by participating in governance can Armenian citizens choose their own futures. In our opinion, democracy depends on domestic policy and is the precondition to national security. The branches of government must be independent from each other and be authorized by the people. To do this, both the executive and legislative governments should be directly elected by the people. The parliament must be elected on a proportional system so that it represents the choice of people. The positions of President and Prime Minister should be combined in one, and the Constitution should be the main law.

- **Foreign policy**

The basis of foreign policy should be Armenia’s sovereignty and pro-European position, including possible EU membership. Relations with neighboring Turkey are important in terms of solving the problems connected with the genocide.

- **Karabagh issue**

There is no such thing as an ‘Artsakh issue’ /the word Karabagh should be deleted from the Armenian vocabulary/. The priority issue of any nation is the restoration of its statehood and establishment of democracy. The issue of Artsakh as a separate problem was simply imposed on us by our enemies in order to distract us from the major task of creating independent Armenia, the only support for Artsakh. The Artsakh issue is a component of the Armenian Cause. It should be solved based on the right of nations to self-determination and historical justice.

- **Diaspora**

Adoption of dual citizenship will boost homeland-Diaspora relations, decrease legal problems and enhance the practical aspect of joint undertakings.

- **Economy**

Western-type free economy, reducing the economic activity of the state to a minimum.

- **Social policy**

This policy should be based on Christian principles. Guided by Christian principles, the state should be like a son to every elderly person and a loving parent for every child.

- **Science & education**

The sector should be in the center of the state's attention. The upbringing of the new generations should start from the elementary grades. Implementation of practical steps loyal to 'one nation, one culture' concept.

NATIONAL ACCORD

Founded: April 27, 2000

Membership: 4,300

Ruling body: Political Board comprised of 4 people, elected at Congress

Chairman: Aram Harutyunyan /elected at Congress/

Candidates: 13

Branches: 45

Contact: Kristine Mkrтчyan (tel. 58 01 37)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

The platform aims to facilitate formation and realization of democratic values. Based on the concept of society of national consent as a priority value of democracy, it aims at supporting social cooperation. The creation of a society of national consent implies appropriate legal reforms. The realization of our platform will result in the building of a state that protects citizens' rights to a dignified, prosperous and secure life.

- **Foreign policy**

The party will achieve a flexible, multi-vector policy, based on political dialogue and good neighborly relations primarily with neighboring countries, constructive participation in regional events and mutually beneficial cooperation within the frameworks of international organizations. Foreign policy must be aim at the international recognition of the genocide and the elimination of its consequences.

- **The Karabagh problem**

Reiterating the commitment to a peaceful and fair resolution of the conflict, the party aims to foster the efficiency of negotiations and ensure the decisive role of Artsakh in resolution efforts.

- **Relations with Diaspora**

To use the economic, financial and intellectual potential of Armenians worldwide. For this purpose, prepare all necessary legal, moral and psychological conditions (including adoption of dual citizenship).

- **Economic policy**

The economic policy of the party is based on liberal conservative ideology. We propose a strategic program of practical steps to raise the welfare of the population.

We shall take measures facilitating cooperation between the state, small and medium businesses, and workers. The opportunities provided by this collaboration will lay the foundation for a society of national consent.

The regulatory role of the state will be strengthened in the cooperation that will alleviate the negative consequences of tax policies and facilitate the activation of the private business sector. This kind of policy will enhance the capacities of small and medium businesses through opening new jobs and combating shadow economy.

We shall ensure effective functioning of state management through realization of a consequent revenue policy.

An efficient economic system will emerge under the supervision of the state, small and middle businesses, workers and their representative structures (government, business organizations and trade unions).

A step-by-step antimonopoly policy adopted by the party will facilitate economic and social progress in an environment characterized by accelerating economic competition.

Shortcomings, imperfections as well as an inconsistent economic policy lead to the development of crime and corruption in the state economic structures.

The planned economic and legal reforms will create an opportunity to provide the society with a strong anti-corruption normative basis turning bribery into a matter of morality for all layers of society.

- **Social sphere**

A policy aimed to reduce the acute social polarization. This policy will increase the availability of health and educational services. Implemented alongside economic development, the policy will result in an increase of overall living standards.

- **Science and education**

Education, science and culture, being significant factors of national existence, will become a matter of concern for the state.

NATIONAL UNITY

Established: 1997

Membership: 46, 000

Branches: in all marzes

Ruling body is elected at Congress

Candidates: 77

Chairman: Artashes Geghamian

Deputy Chairmen: Alexan Karapetian, Koryun Arakelian /tel. 53 03 51/

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

Overcoming the crisis in Armenia, building a civil society, ensuring human rights, pluralism, tolerance, and rule of law. The law treats everyone equally. All reforms, including economic, should be carried out taking into consideration the national security interests. Combating corruption, elaboration of concrete policy for this purpose, creating mechanisms that reduce corrupt practices.

- **Foreign policy**

Establishing friendly relations with neighboring states. Russian-Armenian relations' development on the basis of strategic cooperation is a priority. Fostering relations with Iran, launching a constructive dialogue with Turkey, rehabilitating economic relations with CIS countries. Involvement in international economic programs carried out in the region. Further integration into European organizations, developing ties with the USA, livening up contacts with Middle East and Asian countries.

- **Karabagh issue**

Karabagh should participate in negotiations. No agreement should be signed without its involvement. The main conflicting parties, Karabagh and Azerbaijan, should decide the scope for concessions for the conflict's resolution. Armenia and Azerbaijan do not have mutual territorial claims. The best framework for negotiations is the OSCE Minsk group.

- **Diaspora**

To create an NGO that will coordinate the relations of different state agencies with

the Diaspora. We must elaborate mechanisms that will secure the participation of the Diaspora in vital issues. The Diaspora must assume concrete political responsibilities to assist Armenia.

- **Economy**

Launching a new targeted macroeconomic policy. Cutting loan interest rates, controlling the circulation of national currency, promoting economic stability. Imposing an integrated income tax rate, declaring tax amnesty. Speeding up the bankruptcy of unprofitable enterprises, active implementation of a state industrial policy. Imposing an integrated land tax, regulating taxation mechanisms, creating an insurance system for land and the agricultural sector in general. Introducing various forms of land rent. Using replenishable resources instead of non-replenishable ones. Elaborate and implement a national program to rehabilitate Lake Sevan.

- **Social**

State agencies should ensure the social security of Armenian citizens based on human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is dangerous to make populist promises of greater welfare without explaining where the welfare will come from. Work for a social market economy, combining market relations with social security. Special attention should be attached to refugees.

- **Science and Education**

Special attention should be paid to financing the education sector; elementary education must be compulsory, more kids should get secondary education, educators' salaries should be raised. The state should support Armenian schools in the Diaspora. Government should assist modern scientific programs, have a clear stance towards perspective scientific branches and increase financing of fundamental sciences and Armenian Studies in particular.

ORINATS YERKIR (COUNTRY OF LAW)

Founded: 1997

Membership: 41,000

Ruling body: central board /elected at congress/

Chairman: Artur Baghdasarian.

Candidates: 63

Branches: in all marzes

Contact: Mher Sahgeldian (tel. 52 69 39, 54 24 42)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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Building a state based on rule of law requires efficient mechanisms of human rights protection. In this sphere, there is the need to continue reforming the court system, to create the institution of ombudsmen, to provide availability of legal consulting to the citizens, to prevent power abuse, to struggle against impunity of public officials, to facilitate the humanization of the court system.

- **Domestic policy**

To guarantee further development and strengthening of Armenia, we need to create a democratic competitive political system. This implies creating efficient mechanisms of human rights protection, establishing parliamentary traditions and enhancing the role played by the National Assembly. Political parties must become larger; a stable party system must emerge. The government must ensure free and fair elections, support the emergence of truly independent media and the development of democratic political culture based on the ancient Armenian tradition of communal life. Government management should be based on national security and development doctrines and various program strategies. Eliminating corruption and ensuring the transparency of state structures are major concerns.

- **Foreign policy**

Achieving competitive leadership in the region; strong and dynamic diplomatic relations with world centers of power. The latter implies forming a regional security system, integrating Armenia into regional communications projects, promoting its regional leadership in educational, health and cultural spheres, and promoting Armenian goods in regional markets. As major national issues, the party underlines the packet resolution of the Karabagh problem and the creation of a working mechanism of Armenia-Diaspora-Karabagh cooperation.

- **Economic policy**

Armenian economy should be export-oriented. The most important issues are state organizational and marketing support to large enterprises with internationally competitive production, exploiting local resources and promoting the development of Armenian economy in different spheres; creating fiscal opportunities for small and medium businesses particularly those relying on modern technologies; development of a packet plan for the agricultural and food industries. Priorities in environmental management are the development of an environmental security doctrine, the creation of a system of environmental protection and mechanisms for dealing with environmental hazards. Issues of special importance are rescuing Lake Sevan and protecting the forests.

- **Social sphere**

Social policy should pursue the following aims: a) regulation of unemployment and establishing employment mechanisms; b) a social security system, a new Labor Code and a law ensuring legal support of disadvantaged citizens; c) creating conditions for social justice and equal starting opportunities.

- **Education and science**

Development and realization of a packet plan for strengthening the material basis of schools and modernizing educational programs and methodology; state policy of support to educators; facilitating the formation of large scientific educational centers at universities, long-term support to research and commercialization programs, launching projects relying on modern technologies; creating advanced mechanisms for continued vocational training that should embrace unemployed people.

PEOPLE’S PARTY

Founded: 1995 /by Petros Kasakhian/

Membership: 3,500

Ruling body: Political Board /elected at Congress/

Chairman: Tigran Karapetian / elected at Congress/

Candidates: 18

Branches: in Yerevan and in the marzes

Contact: Karapet Hagopian /tel. 23 11 41/

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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The major goals of the People’s Party are strengthening Armenian statehood, establishing people’s authority, developing economy and culture so as to meet the demands of the society.

• **Domestic policy**

The formation of a political system that guarantees adherence to the Constitution and development of democracy.

The political system should secure the authority of people in the country and the exercise of constitutional norms.

Reducing social polarization, easing interior political confrontation, creating a sound moral & psychological atmosphere and building trust among people are domestic policy priorities.

• **Foreign policy**

Foreign policy should ensure national security and sustainable development. Geographical and historical features shall help Armenia to become a bridge for dialogue and cooperation between civilizations. Together with developing ties with CIS countries, Armenia should launch dialogue with other countries. The solution of Diaspora problems, international recognition of the Genocide and fair management of the Karabagh conflict are priorities.

• **Karabagh issue**

Nagorno-Karabagh has proved itself an established state meeting the accepted international norms. The issue should be solved via political negotiations. Karabagh should participate in negotiations as a competent side, and any decision on the

matter should be coordinated with it. Armenia, on its part, should ensure the security of Karabagh.

- **Diaspora**

All necessary steps should be made for preserving the identity of the Armenian Diaspora. The Diaspora should always be considered a competitive advantage in the international arena.

- **Economy**

We place special importance on the development of the scientific and technical potential and on the choice of economic priorities.

Decisions to privatize enterprises or industries of strategic importance should take national security demands into consideration.

Our party is for the restoration of traditional economic ties and effective cooperation with international economic structures.

Encouraging domestic producers via flexible taxing, customs and credit policies, combating factors which encourage the existence of shadow economy. Drafting a detailed agricultural strategy that includes a flexible pricing policy.

- **Social**

The party will promote the establishment of a constitutional social state. Poverty threatens national security, hampers democratization and effective self-organization of the society. It encroaches upon our traditional, conservative basis – the stability of families; it creates favorable conditions for dissemination of foreign customs in the society and leads to increased emigration. Therefore, overcoming poverty and preserving families are social policy priorities.

The demographic situation in the country is of special concern. Labor legislation should be reviewed, including the part that regulates worker-employer relations. Retirement pensions should be brought closer to minimum subsistence levels.

Young people need special attention. The earthquake zone and other struggling provinces should be subject to development measures. National minorities must have the right to enjoy and develop their own culture.

Our party will ensure the indexation and repayment of the deposits the Armenian citizens had had in Savings bank of Soviet Armenia.

- **Science & education**

Our party believes that education and science are the basis and guarantee of development.

POWERFUL HOMELAND

Founded: June 11, 1997, registered: February 13, 1998

Membership: over 11,500

Branches: 100

Ruling body: Central Board /elected at Assembly/

Chairman: Vardan Vardapetyan /elected at Assembly/

Deputy Chairmen: Stepan Margaryan, Hovhannes Aivazyan

Candidates: 75

Contact: Shirak Torosyan (tel. 52 92 15, 52 36 35)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

The Powerful Homeland Party is committed to the creation of an atmosphere of tolerance in the country and radical reforms of local self government systems. In the political range, the party is right centered.

- **Foreign policy**

Powerful Homeland Party supports a balanced foreign policy. The party underlines the importance of enhancing economic ties and regional cooperation with neighboring countries. The party actively cooperates with the state political structures of Georgia.

- **The Karabagh problem**

Powerful Homeland Party commits itself to the peaceful resolution of the problem. One of the major guarantees for the resolution of the Karabagh problem is the strengthening of Armenia.

- **Relations with the Armenian Diaspora**

The party underlines the importance of relations particularly with the Armenian Diaspora in Russia and other CIS states.

- **Economic policy**

A free, competitive environment is an important condition for the economic development. The party believes that the state has a substantial regulatory role to play in the transition period.

- **Social sphere**

Being a right centered party, Powerful Homeland underlines the importance of providing an adequate system of social security since the reforms are in fact targeted at the citizens.

The party aims to facilitate the creation of a health insurance system and free medical services.

The party aims to create a social and economic environment that will enable Armenians to find jobs at home and not to emigrate.

- **Science and education**

The party supports the idea of state sponsorship to school, science, culture and sports.

RAFFI HOVHANNISIAN UNION

Founded: 2003

Ruling bodies: Heritage and National State parties

Leader: Raffi Hovhannisian

Branches: in all marzes and Yerevan

Candidates: 20

Contact: Ashot Aghababian, press secretary (tel. 58 08 77)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Domestic policy**

The main task of all branches of power is to guarantee the freedom of the nation and of every citizen, rule of law and a safe future. In a democratic state, human rights and individual freedoms are supreme constitutional values. The party envisions the elimination of the existing impunity and crime, plus urgent constitutional reforms of great social importance.

- **Foreign policy**

For a long time now Armenia has followed a complementary policy. In a medium perspective, this approach might provide certain advantages for Armenia, but in the long run the foreign policy of Armenia should not be reduced to this approach only. It is high time to develop a long-term foreign policy doctrine for proper orientation in the new geopolitical realities and adoption of measures targeted at the well-being of the nation. A new foreign policy may in no way challenge the sovereignty of Armenia or its territorial integrity. Relations with foreign partners and international organizations must be guided by the interests of the Republic of Armenia.

- **The Karabagh problem**

Today Artsakh should exist as a sovereign state with a perspective of joining the motherland when the time comes. The resolution of the problem must exclude any unilateral concessions or exchanges.

- **Economic policy**

The economy should develop in free market environment so as to achieve maximum integration in world processes. This is the way to introduce modern production technologies, enhance markets and facilitate commodity turnover.

We propose the following consistent and systematic measures:

- To identify the domestic human, material, productive and resource potential;
- To identify the country's economic and social needs, use domestic resources to provide for them;
- To outline priorities based on both the absolute and the competitive advantages of Armenia, specify the dominant economic spheres that are not limited by the promotion of investments, high technologies, tourism and precious stone processing;
- To use support from foreign and international structures in national projects, create equal conditions for all business in all economic spheres;
- To adopt a flexible and stable tax policy;
- To bring local and external professional and business potentials together to provide step-by-step growth of national economy, its harmonization with the most important developments of regional cooperation and international economics;

Economic progress should start with the liberation of the whole state system from shadow and group economy so as to make it predictable.

- **Social sphere**

Strong families are the pledge of a strong nation.

The long-ignored social stratum - Armenian peasants – deserves special attention. It is in the rural areas that the Armenian family is traditionally strong. We envisage urgent measures aimed at supporting rural families in order to promote their independence.

Young families should be supported, in some cases even provided with housing.

- **Relations with Armenian Diaspora**

The Diaspora, being a consequence of the early 20th century genocide and the Armenian exodus from the historical motherland, is a negative phenomenon in its essence, but in today's realities it has outgrown into an advantage in both material and spiritual terms.

The Armenian government should do its best to unify the potential of the Diaspora, although every single structure there will still contribute to the realization of national dreams.

In the present geopolitical situation, the propaganda machine needs to be operated

in an adequate manner. The world does not know enough about Armenians so there is still a lack of trust and support. We need to keep the international community aware of our problems and aims if we wish to integrate into it. However, even propaganda will not help if every one of us does not work for progress in the economic, scientific, cultural and healthcare spheres.

- **Science, education**

Science, education, modern technologies, national culture and sports no longer serve a decorative purpose. They are issues of both individual and group creativity on the crossroads of tradition and progress.

RAMKAVAR-AZATAKAN PARTY OF ARMENIA

Founded: 1990**Registered:** 1991**Ruling body:** Republican Board / proposed by ADL envoys, elected at Congress/**Chairman:** Rouben Mirzakhanian /elected at Congress/**Deputy Chairmen:** Haroutiun Arakelian, Mekhak Gevorgian, Hrachya Karapetian**Candidates:** 60**Branches:** has clubs in every marz**Media arm:** *Azg* daily**Contact:** Gayane Muradian /tel. 52 64 03/**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**
.....• **Domestic policy**

Armenians believe that the National Assembly is busy with intrigues, parliament members are using their immunity for mercenary purposes, and the government is taking control over the people's property. The corrupted atmosphere should be cleaned up step by step, and the legal bodies must address its origins.

We must secure genuine independence of judicial authorities via legal reforms, ensure full protection of human rights by the country's judicial structures, and struggle against human rights violations.

• **Foreign policy**

Against the background of the emergence of a unipolar world and the creation of such economic-military alliances as US-Israel and Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia, Armenia is facing the danger of becoming a controversial issue for these strategic partners, especially bearing in mind Armenia's orientation towards Russia and Iran. Under this light, Armenia should make it a priority to avoid becoming such an issue while at the same time attempting to ensure the security of its population and borders and the fair solution of the Karabagh issue. For this purpose, it is of utmost importance to ensure sensible and efficient functioning of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs under the control of legislative bodies.

• **Karabagh issue**

The issue should only be settled through political dialogue based on the right of nations to self-determination. In case elected to parliament, ADL members

can ensure effective coordination of the issue with their Diaspora comrades, especially in the USA and Europe, and lobby the interests of Armenia and Karabagh in these countries' legislative bodies. Another point important for the solution of this issue is the effective reproduction of the Armenian population of Karabagh, which will require stronger support to young families, creation of jobs and improvement of social conditions.

- **Economy**

The privatization process should be revised. The state's effort to rehabilitate the economy via the re-launch of private enterprises has failed, which proves that the privatization was carried out as a purpose but not as tool for improving people's lives. The enterprises that have a potential for the future should have their debts frozen and be given tax privileges. We need to create new jobs, develop small-to-medium business and family businesses that will enrich the market for products and services and create new jobs. Bearing in mind that Armenia is considered a high-risk country for investments, small and medium businesses have more chances to attract investments by Diaspora Armenians.

- **Social**

Elaborate state policy on employment. Redesign employment centers from mere registration offices to ones that register and train the unemployed and find jobs for them. The education and training of the unemployed should be financed by the state, welfare allowances should be paid both from the state budget and from the last workplace of the unemployed. This will mean revising the labor code, passing a new law on trade unions which will coordinate all the relations between employers and employees aiming to ensure social wellbeing of citizens.

- **Science & education**

There should be a system combining private and free school and university education.

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF ARMENIA

Founded: 1990

Officially registered by the Justice Ministry on 1991

Membership: 20,000

Ruling body: Party Board /elected at congress

Chairman: Andranik Margarian

Deputy Chairmen: Tigran Torosian, Razmik Zohrabian

Candidates: 120

Branches: 67 in different marzes

Media arm: *Hanrapetakan*

Contact: tel. 58 00 31

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

The vision and the activities of the Republican Party of Armenia stem from the eternal ideas of the Nation and the Homeland. In its relations with all non-governmental organizations, political forces and individuals in Armenia, RPA believes that national and state interests are more important than party, social, religious or other group interests. The state must support the development of political structures, the formation of a full-range multiparty system, and the emergence of a civil society on a democratic platform.

- **Foreign policy**

The activities of the state must aim at a natural integration of Armenia with the international community, the growth of its impact and the development of mutually beneficial political, economic, cultural and other ties with other countries.

- **Karabagh problem**

NKR should not be under the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan. Security must be provided for its population. The RA and NKR should have common boundaries. The development and the internal strength of the Republic of Armenia are major guarantees for a peaceful and fair solution of the problem based on those three principles.

- **Relations with Diaspora**

The state should create favorable conditions in which the potential of Diaspora

Armenians will serve to strengthen the Armenian state and enable the dignified life of its citizens. The ultimate goal is the repatriation of the Diaspora Armenians to their Motherland.

- **Economic policy**

The economic policy should be based on international practices yet take national features into account. The state should provide necessary conditions for the effective operation of state and private enterprises. This will strengthen market economy and ensure normal economic development.

The development of agricultural production must have providing food to local markets as its main aim. Industrial development must provide for economic progress of the country. The ‘Armenian brand’ must become a symbol of the highest quality.

- **Social sphere**

The most valuable possessions of the Armenian state are its citizens with their huge physical, intellectual and moral potential. The major concern of the state is the dignified life of each family or individual, and hence that of the Nation. The state should ensure the citizens’ security, protect their dignity, respect human rights and freedoms and give people the chance to realize their potential. The state should undertake efficient measures to provide its citizens with jobs and adequate living standards, and appreciate the citizens’ services to their Motherland at their true value.

- **Science and education**

The educational system must provide the individual with deep and multidimensional knowledge, simultaneously making him/her understand that this knowledge should first of all serve the strengthening of the Nation and the Motherland.

The state should ensure availability of free secondary education for everyone and should sponsor gifted children through university. Education and culture should serve for the restoration, preservation and development of the national spiritual and material values, uncovering the essence and the lifestyle of the Armenian. Culture and the education should serve to merge national traditions with scientific and technical progress, thus enabling the Armenian state to hold leading positions in the world.

Science, culture and education must promote the preservation and the development of unique national features and moral standards, ancient traditions and cultural values. Therefore, science, education and national culture must be matters of state concern.

UNION OF INDUSTRIALISTS AND WOMEN

Founded: March 14, 2003

Founders: two parties – the *Women of the Armenian Land* and *Advanced United Communist Party of Armenia*, non-governmental organizations - *Producers of Local Goods* and *Yerevan and the Yerevanians*, and some 72 independent businesspeople.

Ruling body: Board comprised of 15 members, among them Janeta Manukian and Vazgen Safarian

Candidates: 15

Contact: Janeta Manukian (tel. 52 52 75, 63 35 91)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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• **Domestic policy**

Ensuring the rule of law through practical separation of rights and responsibilities between all branches of power; practical supervision of the implementation of the rights and responsibilities of state structures and their employees.

• **Foreign policy**

Adoption of relevant measures aimed at the legal recognition of the genocide by international organizations and foreign states; facilitating Armenia’s enhanced integration into the international community, providing for its active participation in world issues; providing long-term stable security through establishment and development of ties with neighboring countries.

• **The Karabagh problem**

Using all legal means adopted in international practice, the union will struggle to establish an independent state of Nagorno-Karabagh and create opportunities for its economic development.

• **Relations with Diaspora**

Creation of favorable conditions for the mutually beneficial participation of Diaspora Armenians in the economic development of Armenia; develop a program of transition to dual citizenship.

We aim to enhance, develop and improve measures to help the Diaspora know and understand economic, cultural and other development in Armenia, and keep the population of Armenia aware of scientific, cultural and business activities of the Diaspora.

- **Economic policy**

We need to create a legal field for the development of realistic programs to facilitate exports; create an operational and flexible system for the protection of rights of local producers by introducing appropriate changes in the taxation and customs legislation; develop a program to protect the rights of customers; provide equal opportunities for the local businesses through legislative reforms; promote privatization, assist the reactivation of idle enterprises; develop a program for the structuring of the agricultural sector; provide adequate protection of entrepreneurship from the interference of state bodies and public officials; create favorable conditions for comprehensive crediting programs on the part of investment companies and banks.

- **Social sphere**

We believe it necessary to develop a list of priorities in the social sphere for the period of 2003-2008 and supervise government implementation of the planned social programs; to create a legislative environment to protect the rights of mothers with babies and young children, and conditions for social protection of young families; to develop programs for integrating refugee families and their children into the moral-political environment; to create a legislative basis for increasing retirement pensions by reducing income tax rates paid by their former workplaces and by creating and developing retirement funds; to provide participation of women's organizations and parties in the drafting and implementation of state policy on women's issues; to create a legislative basis for governmental supervision over child labor.

- **Science and education**

To regulate the system of self-governance of secondary schools, colleges and higher education institutions while working to boost the prestige of educators; to improve the material and human resources of schools in bordering regions through state programs; to develop a national program of child education and training; to provide free compulsory secondary education; to create a legal basis for state support of employment opportunities for college and university graduates; to organize government supervision of the updating of educational programs at colleges and universities; to provide state support to the development of fundamental sciences; to ensure investment opportunities for applied research; to modernize and reactivate sports facilities and infrastructure.

UNITED LABOR PARTY

Established: September 21, 2002

Membership: 901

Ruling body: political council, elected at congress with secret vote, for 2 year term

Chairman: (elected for 2 year term with secret vote) Gurchen Arsenian

Political Board: Edita Gharagyozyan, Tamara Gevorgian, Levon Haroutiunian, Levon Poghosian, Arthur Petrosian, Grigor Ghonjeyan, Gagik Grigorian, Mnatsakan Petrosian, Armen Alaverdian

Candidates: 40

Branches: cities Masis, Ashtarak, Yerevan

Contact: tamara gevorgian (cell. 09 42 55 04)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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- **Domestic policy**

Rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedoms are priorities. Promotion of democracy, inviolability of property rights, building civil society, separating the functions of state agencies, developing social and industrial functions, job creation.

- **Foreign policy**

Establishing prudent, realistic and diplomatic relations with neighboring countries, multi-lateral economic and political ties. Strengthen the role and place of Armenia in the family of civilized nations. Choose national priority issues, among them the fair legal solution of the Karabagh issue.

- **Diaspora**

‘One nation, one homeland’ is the concept of Armenian national unity, common interests and goals. With help of Armenians worldwide, we shall achieve the realization of our ancestors’ dream – the development and empowerment of Armenian statehood. Armenia is the home of all Armenians. The entire intellectual and spiritual potential of Armenians should be used to ensure the prosperity of the homeland.

- **Economy**

Economic development requires the elaboration of favorable tax and customs

policies for exporting competitive home products; the creation of economic and credit systems efficient under free market relations.

Promote flexible market economy, develop small and medium businesses, encourage investments in this sector. Give farmers the right of full ownership of land, accelerate the formation of agricultural crediting systems, and support the creation of agricultural market infrastructures.

- **Social**

The state should fulfill responsibilities stipulated by the Constitution and legislation. Social policy should address the needs of all citizens, not just the disadvantaged. Special care should be provided to young families and the families of soldiers killed in the Karabagh war. Disabled persons are a special priority. The state must ensure equal healthcare for all citizens.

- **Science & education**

An education development program should including vocational training of educators abroad. Combating the brain drain is a priority. We must work to promote research at educational institutions. Education must be available to all social strata.

USEFUL INFORMATION

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 Head of Press Service *Hasmik
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National Assembly

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 Head of Press Service *Anahit Adamian*
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Constitutional Court

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 Web site: www.concourt.am
 Head of Press Service *Hovhannes
 Papikian*
 Tel: 58 81 25

Central Electoral Commission

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 E-mail: webmaster@elections.am
 Head of Press Service *Lilit Sedrakian*
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Central Bank of Armenia

Chairman *Tigran Sargsian*
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 Head of Press Service *Zaruhi
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Press Secretary *Karine Grigorian*
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Ministry of Defense

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