

Serzh Sargsyan, President, Republic of Armenia
Galust Sahakyan, President of the National Assembly, Republic of Armenia
Edward Nalbandyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Armenia
Arman Tatoyan, Ombudsman, Republic of Armenia
Gevorg Kostanyan, Prosecutor General, Republic of Armenia
Vladimir Gasparyan, Chief of Police, Republic of Armenia
Donald Tusk, President, European Council
Jean-Claude Juncker, President, European Commission
Martin Schulz, President, European Parliament
Federica Mogherini, Vice-President of the European Commission, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
Ministers of Foreign Affairs, EU Member States
Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General, Council of Europe
Pedro Agramunt, President, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe
Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
Ilkka Kanerva, President, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Michael Georg Link, Director, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

1 August 2016

Statement

by the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on the Arrest of Hovsep Khurshudyan and Recent Developments in Armenia

We deplore the arrest of our respected colleague Hovsep Khurshudyan, a member of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, amidst the protests on the night of 29-30 July 2016 in Yerevan. The authorities should drop charges of organizing mass disorder accompanied with violence under Article 225 of the Criminal Code against Mr Khurshudyan and other protesters. We demand the immediate release of our colleague, as well as that of all those who have been arrested by the police in recent days.

The citizens of Armenia have every right to demonstrate in support of their views while further police attacks on protestors risk more bloodshed. This lessens the chances of the development of a dialogue between the rulers and the ruled, which is the only way to resolve the present situation.

Brutal attacks by policemen in plain clothes against media representatives who were performing their professional duty at the recent demonstrations should also be deplored as a violation of the principle of media freedom.

We appreciate the fact that another of our detained colleagues from the Civil Society Forum, Levon Barseghyan has already been released by the authorities in a gesture, which suggests that a peaceful end to this present tense situation is possible.

We also recognise the efforts of the Armenian Human Rights Ombudsman who is documenting the present human rights violations and the fact that the Prosecutor General's office has opened inquiries into possible misdeeds by officials against media representatives and others.

Members of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum