



**OFFICE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
PUBLIC RELATIONS UNIT**



Statement on the activities conducted as of 20:00, 20 April and current concerns

20 April 2018, Yerevan

1. From the early morning of April 20, representatives of the Human Rights Defender continued to conduct monitoring of demonstrations and marches, visits to police units, as well as discussion of complaints and reception of citizens at the Defender's Office. Ten groups have been formed for visits to police units. Before each visit, concrete issues were presented to the visitors, and the results were summarized after the visits.
2. Fifty-two calls on the rights of participants in demonstrations and marches have been received via the hotline of the Defender's Office. Visits were organized to the Police Central, Arabkir, Kanaker-Zaytun, Malatia, Mashtots, Erebuni, Shengavit, Nor-Nork, Abovyan and Hrazdan divisions. Private conversations with 200 persons were conducted during the visits, and 20 of them were juveniles. Most of them were apprehended on the ground of charges of administrative offenses.
3. Two-three visits were conducted throughout the day to Police separate divisions. The Human Rights Defender personally, as well as the Office are in constant contact with lawyers and human rights defenders, as well as competent state bodies.
4. Private conversations with those apprehended and examination of apprehension documents revealed issues related to failure to inform the apprehended individuals about the grounds of apprehension, failure to fill in complete data in police registries and apprehension of persons in the vehicle without registration number. Cases have also been recorded on keeping people at police divisions for a time period exceeding that prescribed by law and measures on immediate prevention were taken in the place.
5. The cases of apprehension of juveniles and violence against them are of concern. According to the published videos and calls received by the Defender's Office, in a number of cases of violence against juveniles, the perpetrators were police officers in civilian clothes. Each of these cases must be immediately verified in strict compliance with international rules. All published videos, and complaints have been summarized by the Human Rights Defender with the aim of submitting them for investigation.
6. The violence against journalist Ms. Tehmine Yenokyan, as well as the attempt to apprehend the journalist Mr. Tirayr Muradyan while conducting his professional activities should be condemned.

A separate discussion procedure was initiated and a respective written request will be sent to the investigative body.

7. Citizens have applied to the Defender on having difficulties in using public automobile transportation, as well as on hindering the right of free movement of persons by the companies conducting those regular transportations. A discussion procedure has begun with regard to this issue and a written request was submitted to the RA Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technologies.
8. The results of monitoring of social network users' public posts and comments by the Human Rights Defender's Office show that over the past few days hate speech and incitement to violence have increased.
9. 24-hour observation of social networks as well as media, particularly live stream broadcasts show use of offensive language and bullying towards public bodies, including police servicemen, although during the marches and demonstrations the public figures constantly call to refrain from violence and maintain the peaceful nature of the demonstrations.
10. Increase of hate speech and incitement of violence is also result of apprehensions by the police and to which, in their turn, according to the Defender's Office, contributes the tense atmosphere created in the country. This situation is unacceptable because it can contribute to new cases of violence and, on the other hand new infringements by the Police.
11. The Human Rights Defender's Office works to the potential of its resources and mandate, under emergency regime. All the measures within the Defender's legal mandate are being taken with a view to protecting human rights.