

## **Statement Regarding the Acts of Intimidation towards Armenian Civic Activists**

September 6, 2013

On September 5, 2013 around 22:10-22:20, in the neighborhood of Koghbatsi Street of Yerevan, a few steps away from the RA State Revenue Committee, near his garage Haykak Arshamyan, Project Coordinator of Yerevan Press Club, and Suren Saghatelyan, Board member of Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center, were brutally attacked by 6-7 unknown men. Haykak Arshamyan and Suren Saghatelyan were hospitalized with severe injuries, contusion and fractures. The two civic activists are public figures and carry out their social activities within a legal framework.

Yerevan Press Club and Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center are actively involved in the activities of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. Haykak Arshamyan during the last two days largely participated in the civic protests against the announcement made by Serzh Sargsyan in Moscow regarding Armenia's decision to join the Customs Union, which took place in front of the RA presidential residence and the headquarters of the Republican Party of Armenia.

We, the undersigned, assess the attack as an act of intimidation aimed at all those, who have raised a voice of protest against the Armenian authorities, including NGOs, independent media, public figures and active citizens. We consider this to be a consequence of the prevailing climate of impunity in Armenia, human rights violations, selective law enforcement, the usual practice of political prosecution, the manifestation of which we have also witnessed during the recent days, as repressions were used against activists protesting the controversial construction work at Komitas Street 5 and in front of the Yerevan municipality.

We declare that the full responsibility for this act of intimidation falls on the authorities of Armenia, particularly the law enforcement bodies. If this crime is not solved as soon as possible, it will allow us to declare that this act of violence is directly sponsored by the Armenian authorities.

We urge the civil society and all the free citizens to remain strong, not to retreat before the hired thugs and their patrons, to continue the struggle for their personal rights and freedoms.

**"ASPAREZ" JOURNALISTS' CLUB**

**YEREVAN PRESS CLUB**

**"PROTECTION OF CONSUMERS' RIGHTS" NGO**

**EURASIA PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION**

**MEDIA INITIATIVES CENTER (FORMERLY INTERNEWS ARMENIA)**

**OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS-ARMENIA**

**MEDIA DIVERSITY INSTITUTE-ARMENIA**

**"SHIRAK CENTER" NGO**

**"WE PLUS" NGO**

**"ARENA FOR EDUCATION" NGO**

**MARTUNI WOMEN'S COMMUNITY COUNCIL NGO**

**ARMENIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE**  
**“TRTU” NGO**  
**URBAN FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**  
**“VICTIMS OF STATE NEEDS” NGO**  
**NATIONAL CITIZEN’S INITIATIVE NGO**  
**CIVIC INITIATIVES SUPPORT CENTER NGO**  
**CHILDREN’S SUPPORT FOUNDATION**  
**CIVIC FORUM NGO**  
**REGIONAL STUDIES CENTER NGO**  
**COMMITTEE TO PROTECT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**  
**“DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL PROCESSES” NGO**  
**“FARMERS’ MOVEMENT” NGO**  
**VANADZOR BRANCH OF HELSINKI CITIZENS ASSEMBLY**  
**PROTECTION OF RIGHTS WITHOUT BORDERS**  
**HARMONIC SOCIETY – ARMENIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS**  
**“RULE OF LAW” NGO**  
**URBANLAB YEREVAN ARCHITECT’S LAB**  
**WOMEN’S’ RESOURCE CENTER**  
**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INNOVATION LAB CHARITABLE FOUNDATION (SKILFOUND)**  
**“FREE UNIVERSITY” FOUNDATION**  
**“KHoranArd” INTELLECTUAL CENTER**  
**“BIOSOPHIA” HEALTH, ENVIRONMENTAL AND AGRICULTURE**  
**DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
**SHIRAK BRANCH OF SAKHAROV ARMENIAN CENTER**  
**FOR HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION**  
**“JOURNALISTS FOR THE FUTURE” NGO**