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**THIRD REPORT SUBMITTED BY ARMENIA
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 25, PARAGRAPH 1
OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR
THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

(Received on 5 November 2009)

Third Report of the Republic of Armenia on Implementation of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Introduction

1. Under Article 25 (2) of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as “the Framework Convention”), the Republic of Armenia submits its third periodic report on implementation of the said Convention.
2. The Report contains information on measures taken in the period extending from 2004 to 2009, aimed at implementation of the provisions of the Convention, pursuant to Rule 21 of Resolution (97) 10 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
3. The Report has been elaborated in accordance with the procedure for preparing and approving national reports of the Republic of Armenia, which was approved by the Decision No. 1483-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia on 23 November 2007.
4. In accordance with the above-mentioned procedure, an inter-agency working group was set up for the purpose of preparing the Report, comprised of the following representatives:
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Police of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Staff to the President of the Republic of Armenia,
 - National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Government of the Republic of Armenia,
 - National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia,
 - National Commission on Television and Radio of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Yerevan Municipality,
 - Office of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Coordinating Council for National and Cultural Organizations of National Minorities of the Republic of Armenia.

In elaborating the Report, the Working Group has cooperated with non-governmental organizations of national minorities. The draft report was discussed with the representatives of national minorities and non-governmental organizations during the round table discussion held in October 2009.

5. The Report was approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia on 29 October 2009.
6. In accordance with the Outline defined by the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (GR-H(2008) 11rev), the Report contains information on the follow-up measures undertaken at the national level based on the results of the previous Report (Section 1); and on implementation of the Framework Convention (Section 2).

Section 1

Practical measures undertaken at the national level as a follow up to the results of the second monitoring cycle of the implementation of the Framework Convention

7. The Framework Convention and its related documents, as well as a number of other instruments on the protection of the rights, culture and language of national minorities have been posted in Armenian on the official website of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (<http://www.gov.am/am/staff-structure/info/74/>).
8. In 2008, OSCE office in Yerevan, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, has initiated publication of a collection (in Armenian and Russian) of international legal instruments (UN, Council of Europe and OSCE) and of legislative acts of the Republic of Armenia relating to the rights of national minorities, as well as to the freedom of religion, conscience and belief. The process is in its final stage, and the collection is expected to be published in 2009. This is an important endeavor given its awareness-raising aspect on the rights of national minorities for the latter's representatives, as well as its practical utility for the relevant public authorities of the Republic of Armenia.
9. Discussions were held with the representatives of Marzpetarans (governor's offices) of the Republic of Armenia and Yerevan Municipality on the policy pertaining to national minorities and religious organizations enshrined in the law, and the Framework Convention with its Explanatory Report and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter referred to as the "Charter") were presented, in particular. Each of them was provided with one CD containing the collection of national and international laws concerning the rights of national minorities, as well as the opinions of the relevant Council of Europe expert committees on the process of incorporation of the said Convention and the Charter in the Republic of Armenia.
10. A follow-up discussion on the incorporation of the Framework Convention in Armenia was organized and held on 13 November 2007 together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, which was attended by about 80 people, including Council of Europe experts on the rights of national minorities, representatives of respective ministries of the Republic of Armenia, Marzpetarans, national minorities, and other pertinent non-governmental organizations.
11. An international conference on issues concerning the incorporation of the Framework Convention was organized together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, which was held on 14-15 November 2007. Council of Europe experts on the rights of national minorities and on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, representatives from Hungary, Romania, Georgia, Russia, as well as international and local experts participated in the conference.
12. A seminar was held in Tsakhkadzor on 4-5 November 2006, which was attended by the heads of non-governmental organizations of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. During the seminar, the second opinion of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention on Armenia was also discussed amongst other issues of concern to national minorities. The results of the discussion were included in the comments of the Republic of Armenia, which were also discussed with non-governmental organizations of national minorities.

13. On 29 July 2008, a one week training course aimed at capacity building and strengthening of leaders among the youth of national minorities of Armenia commenced at the initiative of the OSCE office in Yerevan and the World Independent Youth Union, with the support of the Department for National Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. This course is part of the Tolerance Project developed jointly by the OSCE office and the Department. During the course, the booklet titled “National Minorities in Armenia (Obligations, Opportunities)”, which contains the Framework Convention and other documents, was distributed among the young representatives of national minorities. During the course, the Framework Convention was presented, and issues of concern to young representatives of national minorities were discussed.
14. The follow-up documents of the second national report were not officially translated and published in national minority languages. However, for the purpose of its dissemination, staff members of the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia often visit the places of residence of national minorities, meet with the representatives of non-governmental organizations of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, Community Heads, school principals, and provide them with Armenian and Russian versions of the Framework Convention and related documents in an electronic format or in other forms. The school principals were asked to urge class supervisors to organize open classes or allocate master class hours to gradually familiarize students with the contents of the package. Meetings with teachers of minority languages, as well as other pedagogues in schools, students, and parents were held in the communities. During the meetings, the booklet entitled “National Minorities in Armenia (Obligations, Opportunities)” was distributed.
15. The Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia prepared and submitted proposals to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, Marzpetarans of those marzes (regions) of the Republic of Armenia where minorities live in compact settlements, suggesting that they post international legal documents on protection of the rights of national minorities, as well as relevant measures and projects implemented by them in the field concerned on their official websites.
16. In the “Non-Governmental Organizations” section of the website of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia (www.mincult.am), there is a separate page designated to the activities carried out by the associations of national minorities functioning in Armenia, and also containing information on areas of cultural cooperation, and joint projects and events implemented. Currently (September 2009) the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia is working on the development of a cultural web portal where a separate website is to be assigned to cover the culture of national minorities residing in the Republic of Armenia, and the state and regional programs and events implemented, as well as the legal acts and international instruments in the field of culture which are of relevance to them.

Section 2

Measures Aimed at Implementation of the Framework Convention

(a) Measures undertaken in response to the Resolution CM/ResCMN(2007)5 adopted by the Committee of Ministers (986th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, 7 February 2007)

1. On the implementation of the conclusions set out in section 1(b) of the Resolution CM/ResCMN(2007)5 adopted by the Committee of Ministers

17. As regards the financial assistance allocated from the state budget to national minorities, we would like to inform that the size of the financial assistance is growing proportionate to the socio-economic development of the Republic of Armenia. At the moment, there is no possibility to increase the size of the financial assistance in comparison to the previous year given the effects of the economic crisis. It should be noted that notwithstanding the crisis, educational and cultural programs for national minorities continue to be implemented unhindered.
18. The National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia has provided the composition of the population of the Republic of Armenia based on the census, according to the ethnicity and their distribution in urban and rural areas, which is presented in Annex 1 to this Report. Significant changes in the ethnic composition have taken place due to migration processes resulting from the developments in political, economic and social spheres. Annex 2 presents the migration dynamics, the distribution of persons born alive and the deceased according to their national belonging for 2002-2008.
19. Although the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Television and Radio” prescribes a number of restrictions on the language of television and radio programs, they do not extend to languages of national minorities. Moreover, on 26 December 2008, an amendment was made to Article 28 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Television and Radio”, which prescribes an obligation for the Public Television Company to present such programs to the audience in which the interests of national minorities are taken into account, as well as to broadcast programs in the languages of national minorities on the Public TV up to two hours a week.
20. The draft law of the Republic of Armenia “On Citizens of non-Armenian ethnicity and ethnic minorities” was the third attempt to elaborate a law on national minorities. The discussions on the draft did not get finalized due to the sharp criticism of the draft by some representatives of national minorities and the diminishing interest from the others.
21. It is common knowledge that notwithstanding the relatively big number of communities of national minorities in Armenia, the number of persons belonging to those communities is small, and this does not enable them to have their own deputy even from places of compact residence. This is the reason why they do not have a representative in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia. On the other hand, representatives of national minorities have equal right to participate in the life of political parties and establish their own political parties. The realisation of opportunities to exercise these rights depends first and foremost on their own interest and skills.
22. As regards their involvement in the executive bodies and at the local level, this process is implemented within the scope of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia without any discrimination. As a result, citizens belonging to national minorities and meeting the legal

requirements assume positions in different branches of the executive power. In the places of compact residence, they are also involved in bodies of territorial administration and of local self-government.

23. The Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia constantly meets with the representatives of national minorities, the communities and non-governmental organizations to discuss matters relating to their situation, issues of concern, and issues pertaining to realisation of their rights. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia involve national minorities in the programs to be implemented by these Ministries, and consult with them when deciding on issues related to them.

2. On the implementation of the recommendations set out in section 2 of the Resolution CM/ResCMN(2007)5 adopted by the Committee of Ministers

- *further increase awareness-raising measures among the public, politicians and the media regarding national minorities;*

24. The Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia persistently works towards raising the awareness on national minorities among the various strata of society. Regular meetings with heads of various state agencies of the Republic of Armenia, ministers, as well as press conferences in different clubs are held. Many of the media outlets, such as “Aravot”, “Azg”, “Yerkir”, “Hetq” and other printed and Internet newspapers, are keen on covering the problems facing and cultural life of national minorities. An agreement was reached with the editorial office of “Hayots Ashkhar” daily to periodically provide - within the framework of the newspaper - information on national minorities residing in the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

- *find ways to increase the participation of minorities in the media and remove legislative obstacles to broadcasting in minority languages on public radio and television;*

25. See paragraph 19 of the Report.

- *continue to support mechanisms to consult with national minorities with due regard for their diversity;*

26. Coordinating Council for National and Cultural Organizations of National Minorities under the Advisor to the President of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter referred to as the “Coordinating Council”) is a body to consult with national minorities, set up in March 2000 pursuant to the results of the Congress of national-cultural organizations of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. Given the need for ensuring the protection of national minorities, activating their inter-community relations, as well as of making the State care for specific educational-cultural, legal and other issues more effective, the President of the Republic of Armenia approved by his executive order of 15 June 2000, the setting-up of the Coordinating Council.

27. Members of the Coordinating Council are elected in the following manner: each of the 11 national minorities residing in the Republic of Armenia nominates two representatives who represent different organizations of each community. Where the Community has one non-governmental organization, both members are elected from that organization, and where the community has two or more non-governmental organizations, members of the Coordinating Council are elected among representatives from different non-governmental organizations representing the community concerned. Thus, the Coordinating Council has 22 members. It is a consultative body which carries out its activities according to the rules of procedure approved by the Coordinating Council through convening sessions.
28. The main functions of the Coordinating Council are as follows:
- support for and protection of the rights and freedoms of national minorities,
 - preparation of recommendations on the main issues pertaining to the rights of national minorities,
 - discussion and analysis of draft legal acts relating to the rights and freedoms of national minorities, and preparation of proposals,
 - discussion of issues pertaining to educational-cultural programs of national minorities.
29. International instruments ratified by the Republic of Armenia are discussed at the sessions of the Coordinating Council, about which the members of the Council inform wide circles of national minority communities.
30. Upon the recommendation of the Coordinating Council in 2000, for the purpose of providing support to educational-cultural activities of national minorities, 10 million AMD is annually allocated by the Government of the Republic of Armenia to organizations representing 11 communities that are members of the Council. Since 2000, the state budget is programmed with the inclusion of this amount. At the end of each year, the representatives of these organizations transmit information to the Coordinating Council and the Government of the Republic of Armenia on the planned and actual expenditures of activities.
31. At the beginning of each year, the list of joint activities is approved and discussed at the session of the Coordinating Council. The representatives of 11 nationalities represented in the Coordinating Council participate in the activities. Moreover, each community invites the representatives of all the other ethnic communities to celebrate its national holidays. Thus, both national holidays of the Republic of Armenia and those of ethnic minorities are jointly celebrated, conferences and seminars, as well as trips for the purpose of getting acquainted with historical sites of Armenia, concerts, readings, evening events dedicated to famous figures of different nationalities, and other activities are organized.
32. In 2006, with the intermediation of the Coordinator of the Coordinating Council, and upon the submission of the members of the Coordinating Council, a youth group of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia was set up which, starting from that year, with a changing composition participates regularly in "Baze" All-Armenian Youth Festival. The participation of the group with its originality stirred great interest and was warmly welcomed.
33. All this allow national minorities residing in the territory of the Republic of Armenia to get acquainted with each other's languages, traditions, customs, rituals which, in its turn, creates an atmosphere of mutual understanding and tolerance and contributes to mutual penetration and enrichment of cultures.

34. In 2007, on the initiative of the Advisor to the President of the Republic of Armenia and upon the decision of the Coordinating Council, a series of films was shot dedicated to all national minorities residing in Armenia. The cameraperson is Gorge Galactic, a member of the Coordinating Council who represents the Polish community. The film was broadcast by H1 TV channel of the Public Television Company.
35. On 4-5 November 2006, on the initiative of the Coordinating Council and with the support of the President of the Republic of Armenia, together with the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, a seminar was held in Tsakhkadzor on the Framework Convention, the Advisory Committee's second opinion on Armenia on the implementation thereof, the European Charter, and the draft law of the Republic of Armenia "On National Minorities". The seminar was attended by the members of the Coordinating Council, chairpersons of national-cultural organizations, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia, Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, State Language Inspectorate, Board of the Public Television and Radio Company, OSCE, the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan, Office of the Human Rights Defender, as well as other persons dealing with issues under consideration.
36. It should be mentioned that the Coordinating Council actively participates in the political and social life of the country as well. On the initiative of its members and with participation of other representatives of the national minority communities, a number of thematic discussions were held and press conferences were convened in connection with making amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, issues of important social significance, and those relating to national minorities in neighboring states. Meetings of the Coordinating Council with the President of the Republic of Armenia are periodically arranged, where its members directly address their questions of concern to the President.
37. Some members of the Coordinating Council have participated, on their own initiative, as observers during the constitutional referendum of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.
38. In autumn 2007, a study tour of the members of the Coordinating Council to the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic was arranged, where they met with high-ranking officials of the Republic. Trips to various marzes of Armenia were periodically organized which contributed to a broader knowledge of the representatives of national minorities in Armenian history, culture and intercultural links. A visit of the members of the Coordinating Council was also organized to the Jewish settlement and cemetery recently discovered in the village of Yeghegis.
39. The following initiatives during the activities of the Coordinating Council are worth mentioning:
- Publication of textbooks for elementary classes in Yezidi and Assyrian languages,
 - Establishment of the Cultural Centre of Nationalities, the idea of which was conceived at the Council sessions, and later on presented to the President and the Government of the Republic of Armenia. In 2006, the Government of the Republic of Armenia realized the idea when in the centre of the city of Yerevan a Cultural Centre of Nationalities was opened for national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, which was equipped and refurbished with direct involvement of the President of the Republic of Armenia,
 - allocation of two target study seats in the Department of Oriental Studies of the Yerevan State University for Yezidi/Kurdish and Assyrian graduates for 2007-2008 academic year, upon the proposal of the Advisor to the President of the Republic of Armenia,
 - Publication of a new Kurdish "Zagros" periodical started in 2007.

40. A new advisory body - the Public Council was set up upon the Decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia on 13 June 2008. The Public Council is a depoliticized body which functions based on the principle of voluntary participation of citizens of the Republic of Armenia, representatives of non-governmental associations and of Diaspora. The Public Council contributes to the development of the democratic system, to ensuring fundamental rights and freedoms of a human being and a citizen, preventing the establishment of an atmosphere of intolerance in the public, sustainable development and strengthening of the civil society, establishment of mutual confidence between state institutions and citizens and other public associations (civilian institutions), formation of dialogue and reliable relationship of partnership between the public and the authorities, to the increase in the level of their involvement in state administration, as well as to the implementation of public monitoring.
41. For the purpose of identifying and discussing main issues pertaining to the protection of the rights of national minorities and to resolving their problems, a special Committee was set up within the Public Council which includes representatives of all national minorities.
- *increase efforts to ensure the availability of sufficient and qualified teachers and textbooks for education in minority languages, take measures to establish pre-school education, especially in areas where persons belonging to national minorities live in substantial numbers, take more resolute action to reduce drop-out rates affecting in particular students belonging to some national minorities;*
42. In the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia of 26 January 2007 on “Approving the exemplary staff list, density of groups, and normatives for state and community pre-school educational establishments of the Republic of Armenia,” a separate provision in the Annex on the density of children groups is provided for the possibility to operate groups with children of national minorities with incomplete composition, which will foster the involvement of these children in pre-school educational establishments. Thus, for example, if the number of children in kindergarten groups of pre-school establishments is envisaged 25-30, the operation of groups with children of national minorities is allowed with 8-10 children available.
43. Pre-school educational establishments or groups in settlements of the Republic of Armenia with national minority population are as follows:
- one kindergarten in Artashat, where Russian is taught, for Russian children of the military garrison of Ararat Marz,
 - two kindergartens in the town of Gyumri of Shirak Marz, where Russian is taught, for Russian children of the military garrison.
44. In the Verin Dvin school (Ararat Marz), there are classes where lessons are conducted in Assyrian, there is no Assyrian kindergarten; however, the Assyrian Community has presently initiated the repair of the dilapidated building of the kindergarten for the purpose of making it an educational and cultural centre with the involvement of pre-school groups.
45. One pre-school group used to operate with the status of "Pirea" LLC in Kentron District in Yerevan (the director is Greek by nationality); however, currently, due to lack of demand, an Armenian group operates. Various educational and cultural events are organized for the Greek community in the kindergarten.

46. The director of Gyumri kindergarten No.18 is Yezidi by nationality, and the director of the kindergarten No.6 of Kentron District in Yerevan is Russian by nationality. The directors of kindergartens under the authority of military garrisons are also Russians by nationality.

- *continue to provide opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities to opt for Russian language education;*

47. Russian language general education schools in the Republic of Armenia by marzes:

Location	School
Yerevan	7
	8
	29
	35
	55
	69
	62
	77
	85
	109
	122
	124
	132
	164
	147
176	
Kotayk Marz	Hrazdan School No. 10
	Abovyan School No. 4
	Nor Hachn School No. 2
	Arzni village school
	Charentsavan School No. 3
Gegharkunik Marz	Sevan School No. 3
Shirak Marz	Gyumri School No. 2
	Gyumri School No. 7
	Gyumri School No. 23
Lori Marz	Vanadzor School No. 4
	Vanadzor School No. 11
	Tashir School No. 1
	Fioletovo School
	Lermontovo School
Armavir Marz	Armavir School No. 5
	Vagharshapat School No. 5
Tavush Marz	Dilijan School No. 2
	Ijevan School No. 5
Ararat Marz	Artashat School No. 4
	Verin Dvin village school
	Dimitrov village school

48. In the Republic of Armenia, there are also six schools under the garrison of the Army of the Russian Federation, two of which are in Yerevan, the rest - in Artashat, Meghri, Armavir,

and Gyumri. One out of 1410 secondary schools in the Republic is a Russian language school, whereas in 39 schools, two of which are private, lessons are conducted in Russian in grades 1 to 11 (in some schools certain grades are omitted). 16 out of 37 schools are in Yerevan, and the rest are in marzes. Currently, two private schools operate in Yerevan - "Slavyanskaya" (Russian language school), and "Mashtots" (it has classes where lessons are conducted in Russian).

49. The number of students studying in these classes is about 10 thousand: their parents have Russian citizenship or are Russian by nationality. Students of national minorities and those that have returned from Russia, also study in the classes where lessons are conducted in Russian, being admitted to those classes.
50. Cooperation in the field of education and science between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the Russian Federation is mainly implemented within the framework of the "Agreement on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Science and Education between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the Russian Federation" (November 1995). Based on the said Agreement, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia is the partner in the process of implementation of education and scientific programs with the Russian Federation.
51. The Russian language schools (classes) use the textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, as well as the curricula recommended and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia.
52. Since 2006, each year a number of activities were held in Russian educational and scientific establishments within the context of the Armenian year in Russia, with the participation of Armenia and Russian scientists, as well as renowned people in the field of education and science.
53. In all Armenian general education schools of the Republic, the Russian language and literature are taught from grades 2 to 11, and the teaching is conducted with textbooks created in Armenia taking into account the peculiarities of teaching Russian in national schools.
54. Upon the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia adopted in 1999, schools with advanced teaching in Russian were opened (60 in total), where the subject is taught from the 1st grade. Special textbooks and methodological guides have been published for these schools.
55. The National Institute of Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Language Development Centre of the Republic of Armenia regularly conduct training courses and seminar-consultations for Russian language teachers. Such courses are organized also in the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University. Every year several groups of teachers undergo training in Moscow.
56. Some schools in Armenia are named after Russian scholars, writers and poets: A. Sakharov, V. Mayakovski, A. Blok, A. Chekhov, V. Belinski, L. Tolstoy, and others. For a number of years schools after A. Pushkin (in Gyumri, Vanadzor, Stepanavan, and Yerevan) participate in conferences of schools of CIS and Baltic countries.
57. The list of subjects of school Olympiads held annually in the Republic includes Russian as well (school, district, town, regional, and republican rounds). Competitions and festivals are

organized. Armenian students participate in the distance Olympiad of the Russian language, and there are already three winners from Yerevan, Kapan, and Sisian.

58. Every year students attend summer education camps in the Russian Federation (international camp “Moscovia”). Participation of officials of the education sector, as well as of principals and teachers of schools in seminar-conferences held in Moscow has already become a tradition. 21 Russian teachers from the Republic of Armenia have become Pushkin Prize winners in the period 2004-2009. Every year teaching and methodological literature is imported into Armenia from the Russian Federation as humanitarian assistance. “Russian Language in Armenia” journal is being published in the Republic of Armenia for already 10 years and is provided to all schools free of charge.

59. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, jointly with various educational organizations and non-governmental organizations of the Russian Federation, carries out educational programs and projects; it contributes to the dissemination and development of the Russian language, as well as to the increase of its role, as a means of international communication.

- *undertake more systematic monitoring of incidents of discrimination based on ethnic origin, with the involvement of the Human Rights Ombudsperson’s Office;*

60. On 21 October 2003, the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Human Rights Defender” was adopted, upon which, on 19 February 2004, Ms. Larisa Alaverdyan – a human rights advocate, member of the Human Rights Committee adjunct to the President of the Republic of Armenia, and the President of “Against Legal Arbitrariness” non-governmental organization - was appointed, upon the Decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia, as Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia, and assumed her duties on 1 March 2004. The transitional provision of the Law provided that the powers of the first Defender terminate on the 30th day following the entry into force of the amendments to the Constitution. Following the amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia in 2005, in accordance with Article 83.1 of the amended Constitution, on 17 February 2006 Mr. Armen Harutyunyan was elected as Human Rights Defender by the National Assembly for a term of six years.

61. During the first quarter of each year, the Defender transmits a report on its activities and on violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the previous year to the President of the Republic of Armenia and to the executive, legislative and judicial authorities; during the spring session of the National Assembly, the report is presented at the meeting of the National Assembly. Partner relationship is established between the heads of the communities of national minorities and the Defender's Office. The Defender and its staff participate in all activities of the national minority communities.

62. See also paragraphs 80-86 of the Report.

- *ensure that any forthcoming law on national minorities is fully in line with the provisions of the Framework Convention.*

63. As to full compliance of any law on national minorities with the provisions of the Framework Convention, it should be noted that Article 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and Article 5 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On International Treaties” ensure the prevalence and direct application of international treaties; pursuant to Articles 12-

20 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Legal Acts,” decisions of authorities of the Republic of Armenia shall not contradict the international treaties ratified by the Republic of Armenia, and Article 21 stipulates that “Laws and other legal acts of the Republic of Armenia shall be in line with the general norms and principles of international law.”

(b) Measures Aimed at Implementation of the Framework Convention, Article-by-Article

Article 1

The protection of national minorities and of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to those minorities forms an integral part of the international protection of human rights, and as such falls within the scope of international co-operation.

64. The Republic of Armenia is actively cooperating with the Council of Europe bodies dealing with minority issues and carrying out monitoring, i.e. Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN); Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities; European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI); Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
65. The authorities of the Republic of Armenia also attach high importance to the fight, at both national and international level, against any form of racial discrimination. During the World Conference against Racism held in 2001 in Durban, Armenia was elected as Vice-Chair of the Conference, and was actively participating in its workings. Subsequently, starting from 2007, i.e. the beginning of preparatory activities for the Durban Review Conference held in Geneva from 20-24 April 2009, Armenia actively participated in that process being elected as Vice-Chair of the Preparatory Committee and chairing the elaboration of the first draft of the final document of the conference. The principles of the Durban Declaration and Action Plan make the basis for the activities of State authorities of the Republic of Armenia dealing with the fight against racial discrimination. At the national level, they are taken into account in implementing both legal reforms and practical measures.

Article 2

The provisions of this framework Convention shall be applied in good faith, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance and in conformity with the principles of good neighborliness, friendly relations and co-operation between States.

66. During the reporting period, Armenia implemented extensive measures to bring the human rights protection mechanisms in line with international standards; dozens of international human rights treaties were ratified, and the legislation of the Republic of Armenia underwent reforms.
67. The amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia were adopted on 27 November 2005 through a referendum. Article 3 of the Constitution proclaims that the human being, his/her dignity, and fundamental rights and freedoms are ultimate values. The State ensures the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen in conformity with the principles and norms of international law. The state is guided by fundamental rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen as directly applicable rights. The

right to freedom is closely linked with immunity, i.e. with security and freedom of a person guaranteed by the state, which excludes any encroachment on the person, his/her honor, and dignity. Therefore, pursuant to Article 14 of the Constitution, “dignity of a person shall be respected and protected by the State as an inviolable foundation of human rights and freedoms.” The amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia are aimed at protection of the right of a person to choose and preserve his/her national and ethnic identity (Article 41), the right to freedom of thought, conscience and belief (Article 26), as well as religious rights (Article 8).

68. The State ensures the protection of human rights and freedoms through the legislative body, by establishing a national legal system. It should be noted that the amended Constitution of the Republic of Armenia also adopted the approach of direct incorporation of international treaty provisions into the national legislation. Thus, pursuant to the constitutional provision, international treaties ratified by the Republic of Armenia are an integral part of the legal system of the Republic of Armenia and prevail over the national laws. That is why according to the relevant provision of Article 6 of the Constitution, in case of a conflict between the norms prescribed in international treaties and those of national laws, the norms of the treaty shall apply.
69. Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia proclaims that everyone has the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity. Persons belonging to national minorities have the right to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language, and culture.

Article 3

- 1. Every person belonging to a national minority shall have the right to freely choose to be treated or not to be treated as such and no disadvantage shall result from this choice or from the exercise of the rights which are connected to that choice.*
- 2. Persons belonging to national minorities may exercise the rights and enjoy the freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention individually as well as in community with others.*

70. Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia stipulates that "Everyone shall have the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity". In Armenia, any person belonging to a national minority freely chooses to be treated or not to be treated as such. Intolerance between Kurdish and Yezidi ethnic communities still persists in Armenia. For more details see the second Report. The problem concerning the Kurdish and Yezidi textbooks mentioned in the second Report has been resolved. To overcome this situation, textbooks in Yezidi have been published for the Yezidi community, and in Kurdish - for the Kurdish community.
71. According to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia “On Approving the Passport System Regulations of the Republic of Armenia and the Description of the Passport of the Republic of Armenia Citizens,” an entry on national origin may, upon the request of the citizen of the Republic of Armenia, be made in his/her passport by the Passport and Visa Department of the Police of the Republic of Armenia or its territorial subdivisions, or - in foreign countries - by diplomatic missions or consular offices of the Republic of Armenia. Persons belonging to national minorities often do not exercise their right due to insufficient

awareness and use thereof, and this makes it impossible to collect complete information on national minorities.

Article 4

1. *The Parties undertake to guarantee to persons belonging to national minorities the right of equality before the law and of equal protection of the law. In this respect, any discrimination based on belonging to a national minority shall be prohibited.*
2. *The Parties undertake to adopt, where necessary, adequate measures in order to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. In this respect, they shall take due account of the specific conditions of the persons belonging to national minorities.*
3. *The measures adopted in accordance with paragraph 2 shall not be considered to be an act of discrimination.*

72. Article 14.1 adopted through amendments to the Constitution in 2005 proclaims that everyone is equal before the law. Discrimination on the ground of sex, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion, ideology, political or any other opinion, belonging to a national minority, property status, birth, disability, age, or other personal or social circumstances, is prohibited.
73. As a result of adoption in 2007 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Making Amendments and Supplements to the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia” by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Article 8 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia prescribes that discrimination concerning the rights, freedoms and responsibilities on the ground of race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion, ideology, belonging to a national minority, or birth, is prohibited.
74. The Code of the Republic of Armenia “On Administrative Offences” provides for examination of a case on administrative offences according to the principle of equality of citizens. Particularly, according to Article 248, “Examination of cases on administrative offences shall be carried out according to the principle of equality of all citizens before the law and the authority conducting the examination of the case, irrespective of their origin, social and property status, belonging to a race or nation, sex, education, language, attitude towards religion, type and nature of occupation, place of residence, and other circumstances”.
75. Article 3 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On the Nationality of the Republic of Armenia” prescribes that nationals of the Republic of Armenia are equal before the law, regardless of the grounds for acquiring the nationality of the Republic of Armenia, national origin, race, sex, language, belief, political or any other opinion, social origin, property or other status, and enjoy all the rights, freedoms and bear the responsibilities prescribed by the Constitution and by laws.
76. Article 8 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On the Penitentiary Service” also lays down that everyone is equal before the law and is equally protected by the law without any discrimination.
77. The Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia prescribes that direct or indirect violation of rights and freedoms of a person and citizen in connection with person’s national origin, race,

sex, language, belief, political or any other opinion, social origin, property or any other status, which has impaired the legitimate interests of the person, is punishable by fine or imprisonment.

78. During the reporting period, no crimes on grounds of national discrimination were registered in the Republic of Armenia.
79. In the period extending from 2004-2009, 24 application-complaints have been addressed to the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia by representatives of 11 national minorities residing in the Republic of Armenia.
80. The issues put forward in the application-complaints received related to:
 - Difficulties faced in acquiring the nationality of the Republic of Armenia;
 - Accommodation issues, particularly difficulties in registering with competent authorities to obtain an apartment;
 - Difficult social conditions;
 - Difficulties faced in social services sector, particularly complexities faced with regard to being included in the family benefit scheme, and in receiving pension;
 - Groundlessness of judicial acts rendered by judicial authorities of the Republic of Armenia;
 - Cases of disagreement by prisoners with the judgments entered against them.
81. The examination of the above-mentioned applications shows that the violations of their rights were of general nature and had no connection with their belonging to a national minority; their complaints covered such issues as are generally covered in application-complaints of the population.
82. These complaints were processed in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, and, based on the nature of the case concerned, the Defender adopted decisions in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Human Rights Defender". The outcomes were different: issues put forward in some complaints were resolved positively, and the rights of persons lodging the complaints were reinstated. The allegations on violation of rights made in some complaints simply were not confirmed; thus the Defender adopted decisions on the absence of a human rights violation.
83. Meanwhile, it should be mentioned that the representatives of national minorities, particularly of the Yezidi community, filed two complaints on discrimination against them. Thus, they complained that the graves of their ancestors were desecrated as a result of construction in those areas. The Defender accepted the complaint for consideration, and it is still in the process of examination.
84. The representatives of the Yezidi community filed another complaint alleging that during the privatization of lands in 1991 no Yezidi family received land; Yezidis are not involved in the local self-government body of the village; the Armenian district of the village is provided with gas supply and was asphalted, whereas the houses of Yezidis are not provided with gas supply, and the streets adjacent to their houses are in poor condition; etc. The Defender requested thorough explanations from the head of the relevant community with regard to the issues raised in this complaint, who gave detailed clarifications on each issue raised in the complaint. The investigation into the complaint was terminated on the ground of absence of any violation of human rights.

85. It is also worth mentioning that the Human Rights Defender's Office, under the sponsorship of the UN, conducted a brief study on the status of representatives of national minorities in Armenia and on their problems. The findings of the study will soon be presented to the National Assembly and other competent authorities.

Article 5

1. *The Parties undertake to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.*
2. *Without prejudice to measures taken in pursuance of their general integration policy, the Parties shall refrain from policies or practices aimed at assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities against their will and shall protect these persons from any action aimed at such assimilation.*

86. Continuous contribution to the preservation, dissemination and development of the cultural heritage and culture of national minorities is one of the priorities of the cultural policy. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia closely cooperates with the associations and non-governmental organizations of national minorities and assists in arrangement of concerts, exhibitions and other cultural events. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia regularly holds meetings and consultations with the representatives of the associations of national minorities where plans for joint activities, issues of national minorities in the field of culture, and proposals on improvement of the relevant legal framework are discussed. Protocols are drawn up following the discussions, and instructions are given to relevant departments.

87. Representatives of national minorities may submit their proposals relating to the field of culture also through the website of the Ministry (www.mincult.am), where information on various cultural events as well as on changes in the legal framework is posted regularly.

88. For the purpose of preserving and supporting the culture of national minorities, paragraph "9. Cooperation with the national minorities residing in the territory of Armenia" of Section "4.4.4. Culture" of the 2008-2012 Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia provides for measures aimed at preserving the cultural identity of national minorities and involving them in the cultural sector of Armenia through publication of non-state media and literature in the languages of national minorities, organization of festivals, restoration of monuments of religious and ethnic communities, and supporting the development of modern art.

89. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia has developed a number of strategic plans of utmost importance within the framework of state programs of special significance to the Republic of Armenia. Those include the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia "On Approving the fields of activities of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia aimed at ensuring the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia" which was elaborated based on the provisions of the National Security Strategy (approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia on 7 February 2007), and 2008-2012 Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (approved by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on 30 April 2008). Point 6 of the cultural activity plan provided for by the provisions of the National Security Strategy relates to the protection of historical, spiritual, cultural values and ethnic identity of the national minorities residing in the

territory of the Republic of Armenia and provides that the policy of the Republic of Armenia with regard to national minorities rests upon three fundamental principles:

- (a) Support the preservation of ethnic identity and the development of ethnic culture,
- (b) Prevent any form of ethnic discrimination,
- (c) Promote full integration of non-Armenian population into the Armenian society.

90. Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On the Fundamentals of the Cultural Legislation,” the Republic of Armenia supports the preservation and development of the cultural identity of national minorities residing in its territory. With a view to supporting the educational and cultural activity of national minorities, funds available for all national minorities are allocated in the state budget of the Republic of Armenia every year.
91. The annual and medium term expenditure framework of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia envisages annual budgetary allocations to support the cultural activities of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia within the framework of the sub-project "Support to the Culture of National Minorities" of the Project “State Support to Implementation of Cultural Activities.” Particularly, within the framework of the mentioned sub-project, 700000 AMD was allocated in 2007, 1800000 AMD - in 2008, and 2300000 AMD - in 2009.
92. The increase in budgetary allocations allowed not only to increase the number and to extend the geography of participants in the events held traditionally, but also to include new projects. For already 3 years the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia is organizing its annual events (music festivals and picture exhibitions) according to the principle of close cooperation with the national minorities residing in marzes and has involved large number of community creators without any age requirements. All plans of activities are discussed with the representatives of national minority organizations of the Republic of Armenia.
93. The following activities are regularly conducted only for national minorities:
 - Exhibitions of fine art and decorative applied art of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, involving creators from 11 communities. The 7th exhibition was held in 2008 (500000 AMD was allocated from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia for its organization);
 - Music festival of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, where representatives from all the communities of national minorities participate. National songs, dances, and music are performed during the festival. The festival was traditionally held in Yerevan; however, in recent years it is organized in marzes of the Republic of Armenia, where national minorities are mainly residing. The 2008 festival was held in the town of Akhtala of Lori Marz of the Republic of Armenia (700000 AMD was allocated from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia for its organization), for which the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Armenia awarded a special prize “To the music festival of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia for the best new regional cultural project of 2008.”
 - Since 2008 a new project “Organization of visits to the monuments of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia and film making” is being implemented. The Project is not only of popular-scientific nature, but also aims at introducing the cultural heritage to the public (600000 AMD was allocated from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia for its organization). For the implementation of the above-mentioned projects 2300000 AMD is allocated in the state budget in 2009, compared to 1800000 AMD in 2008.
 - The publication of literature of national minorities is one of the projects that commenced in 2008. Particularly, "Literary Almanac of Writers of National Minorities" was published, which covers the creators of national minorities, for which 950000 AMD was allocated from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia in 2008. 540000 AMD is allocated for

the publication of literature of national minorities in 2009 (decrease in the allocated amount is conditioned with the economic situation of the country).

- A film “Assyrians in Armenia” is to be shot in 2009 (1000000 AMD is envisaged to be allocated from the state budget).

94. A number of activities have been organized by the “Council of Nationalities of the Republic of Armenia” non-governmental organization. Children of national minorities also participated in the competition of storytelling in their native languages and were awarded with certificates of authenticity of medals. The Child Protection Day was celebrated in the A. Babajanyan Concert Hall in 2008, where children of national minorities demonstrated their art, song and dance. “Council of Nationalities of the Republic of Armenia” non-governmental organization also organized the presentation of the book entitled "Свадьбу сыграли дважды" [The wedding was celebrated twice] by Amarike Sardar, President of the “Council of Kurdish Intelligentsia” non-governmental organization, which was published in 2005.

95. About 450 books in Greek, 686 books in Kurdish and thousands of books in Russian are kept and used in the languages of national minorities in the National Library of Armenia. There is also a large number of literature in these languages in other libraries of the Republic; books in Russian are available in school libraries as well. There is also a significant number of books in the aforementioned as well as in other minority languages (including in languages of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia: Georgian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, German, and Polish) in the libraries of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia and of relevant scientific research institutions.

96. In 2008, literature in the languages of national minorities was also published within the framework of the “Government-Sponsored Literature” Program. The tables below show the list of the published literature:

<i>Literature of National Minorities (2008)</i>						
			<i>Volume (press sheet)</i>	<i>Edition (copy)</i>	<i>Unit Price (Armenian Dram)</i>	<i>Amount (Armenian Dram)</i>
1.	Amarike Sardar	“Our Village”, stories (in Kurdish)	7	500	1000	500000
2.	Shamoyan Smo	Selection of Works	10	500	900	450000
<i>Total</i>			17	1000		950000

<i>Literature of National Minorities (2009)</i>						
			<i>Volume (press sheet)</i>	<i>Edition (copy)</i>	<i>Unit Price (Armenian Dram)</i>	<i>Amount (Armenian Dram)</i>
1.	Ahmade Khani (translation from Kurdish by Ch. Rash Mstoyan)	“Mem and Zin”	10	300	1000	300000
2.	Samand Sima	Stories in Kurdish	8	300	8000	240000
<i>Total</i>			18	600		540000

97. For the purpose of ensuring the recognition of historical and modern monuments of national minorities, since 2008 the Ministry of Culture has undertaken a new project - production of series of films. A 34-minute film entitled “Our song and our monuments” featuring the monuments of Aragatsotn and Lori- Northern part of Armenia, is already ready and Akhtala music festival is also presented there.
98. Currently, one of the significant issues of the cultural policy is also the involvement of creators and groups of national minorities in the cultural activities. Particularly, to activate the cultural life in the regions and encourage the creative groups, the Ministry always invites relevant groups of national minorities (Russian “Garmosha” troupe) to participate in national events (republican festival of puppet theatres), encourages them, and ensures mass media coverage of their work.
99. 11 newspapers (nine of them are published with the state support), and 4 monthlies (three of them with the state support) are published in the languages of national minorities in Armenia from 2008-2009. The table below shows information on the state aid allocated for the press published in the languages of national minorities in 2009 (AMD 9627100 was allocated in 2008):

Press published in the languages of national minorities (2009)		Total AMD 12168000
Newspapers		
“National Union of Yezidis” NGO	“Yezdikhana” [Voice of Yezidis]	1000000
“National Committee of Yezidis” NGO	“Lalish”	1000000
““Ria Taza” [New Way] newspaper Editorial Office” LLC	Ria Taza” [New Way]	1000000
“Golos” LLC	“Golos Armenii”	500000
“Ukraine” Federation of Ukrainians of Armenia” NGO	“Dni-pro-Slavutich”	2668000
“Kurdish National Council of Armenia” NGO	“Zagros”	1000000
Jewish Community of Armenia	“Magen David”	500000
“Iberia” Georgian Charitable Community” NGO	“Iberia”	500000
“Novoye Vremya” daily Editorial Office" LLC	“Novoye Vremya”	500000
Journals		
“Armenian Society of Cultural Connections” NGO	“Palitra”	500000
“Patrida” NGO	“Byzantine Heritage”	500000
“Litera” LLC	“Literaturnaya Armenia”	2500000

100. With the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, fine arts and decorative applied arts exhibitions and music festivals are traditionally held in Yerevan and the marzes with the participation of all the communities of national minorities. All the historical and architectural, cultural, and religious structures located within the territory of the Republic of Armenia are under state protection – irrespective of their ethnic or religious

belonging. The state pays special attention to the cultural and creative life of individual national communities.

101. The heads of non-governmental organizations of national minorities raised the issue of the status of the cultural centre of national minorities located at 22 Saryan street in Yerevan, as to whether to place it under the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia or grant it with a status of an independent centre. As per discussions with the Ministry of Culture, it was proposed to transform it into a state non-commercial organization under the Ministry. The process is currently halted, due to the economic crisis.
102. Representatives of national minority organizations proposed to establish cultural centres of national minorities in the marzes inhabited by substantial number of persons belonging to a national minority, similar to those in Yerevan. The Ministry of Territorial Administration of the Republic of Armenia has referred the issue to the marzpetarans. The issue will be discussed locally with the heads of relevant communities and representatives of national minorities.
103. The grant of 10 million AMD provided by the Government of the Republic of Armenia to the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, which is distributed among the non-governmental organizations of national minorities, is managed by the chairpersons of those organizations. These funds are mainly used for the holidays and events of community importance for national minorities, as well as for certain necessary expenses (purchase of national clothing, rental of premises for the events, prizes, etc.). Besides the 10 million AMD grant envisaged by the State Budget, the non-governmental organizations receive grants by submitting their own project proposals as well. For the purpose of meeting their educational and cultural needs, the non-governmental organizations of national minorities – apart from the support from the Government of the Republic of Armenia - also make use of other sources, such as embassies, international funds, etc.
104. The fact that the representatives of national minorities mostly reside in the marzes of the Republic of Armenia is taken into account in the regional cultural development programs. Each marz is treated with differentiated approach based on the peculiarities and problems of national minorities residing in the given marz. Representatives of unions of national minorities are involved in the elaboration of the above-mentioned programs. A state program on the rehabilitation of cultural centers functioning in the marzes of the Republic of Armenia is envisaged, which will also contribute to the activation of the cultural life and involvement of the society in cultural activities.
105. Actually, cultural life in rural communities is generally not so active. Cultural events in the communities are financed from rural community budgets, which - compared to the whole country - totals to a modest amount. These funds are usually insufficient, culture centers are in a very poor condition; very few villages have song and dance bands or musical instruments. Schools have assumed the role of cultural centers. Within school events, the culture of national minorities is presented as well. Representatives of national minorities of communities celebrate all their traditional holidays and rituals spontaneously. It should be noted that the state of the cultural life in the villages is typical throughout the Republic of Armenia. Although rural cultural centers are funded and reconstructed through various programs, there is still much to be done. The 2008-2012 Program of the Government of the Republic of Armenia envisages solutions to this problem; however, the economic crisis has already shifted the deadlines.

106. Armenia is involved in the “All are Different, All are Equal” campaign of the Council of Europe, local initiatives conducted in this framework pay special attention to the promotion of religious and cultural tolerance.
107. As mentioned above, upon the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of 2004, an area in the centre of Yerevan was allocated to national minorities for establishing a cultural center, which was opened in 2007.
108. A series of TV programs covering the fairy-tales and mythology (legends) of ethnic groups living in Armenia and of a number of religious communities were developed through cooperation of the editorial office of children’s programs of Shoghakat TV channel and the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.
109. Under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Armenia and the OSCE Office in Yerevan, a solo concert dedicated to the works of Willy Weiner, a Jewish composer in Armenia, was held designated to “Culture of Tolerance,” and a DVD containing the works performed at the solo concert, as well as other works of Willy Weiner was released.
110. In 2006, with the efforts of the Jewish community, the support of the Yerevan Municipality, and the financial assistance of the Hanrapetakan [Republican] Party a monument dedicated to the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide was erected in the centre of Yerevan, the capital of the Republic of Armenia.
111. In 2007, the Government of the Republic of Armenia allocated 12 million AMD for the refurbishment of the Jewish cemetery-monument of the 14-17th centuries situated in Vayots Dzor marz of the Republic of Armenia, which were completed in the autumn of 2008. A ceremony marking the refurbishment of the cemetery and an international conference dedicated thereto was held in May 2009. The event that hosted high-ranking guests from Israel was organized by the Primate of the Syunik Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia; the Primate was the first to discover the cemetery and take it under his patronage.
112. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia awarded Ms. Rima Varzhapetyan, Chairperson of the Jewish Community of Armenia NGO, with the Prime Minister’s commemorative medal for developing and strengthening the Armenian-Jewish relations.
113. In 2007, the Office of the President of the Republic of Armenia rendered financial support to the Assyrian, Yezidi, and Kurdish communities to provide the members of their song and dance groups with national costumes.
114. In 2007, under state funding a sound recording studio of Assyrian songs was launched at the Cultural Center of national minorities.
115. In 2005, as part of the process of returning religious structures nationalized during the Soviet era to the relevant religious communities, St. Mariam (Astvatsatsin) Church of Arzni village of Kotayk marz and St. Tovmas Church of Verin Dvin village of Ararat marz of the Republic of Armenia were returned to the Assyrian religious community. In Yerevan, St. Tiramayr Church of the Russian Orthodox Church was returned to the Russian religious community.

116. Considering the request of the Assyrian community in Armenia to erect a monument dedicated to the memory of the innocent victims of the Armenian and Assyrian people in 1915, a 16 sq-meter area in the Oghakadzev Park (territory adjacent to the intersection of Nalbandyan and Moskovyan streets) was allocated in the central part of Yerevan for erecting the monument, upon the Decision of the Mayor of Yerevan on 12 November 2008. The work on erecting the monument is in its planning stage.
117. In the reporting period, national minorities regularly celebrate holidays and hold events of community importance with the support of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, which are referred to in Annex 3. Apart from the mentioned events, the Government of the Republic of Armenia encourages and creates favorable conditions for national minorities to enrich their cultural life through other various events, part of which tend to become customary. Such events include:
- Exhibition of works of artists of the Assyrian community in Armenia organized at the Narekatsi Art Institute's Gallery in December 2008, at the opening ceremony of which "Assyrians in the Eastern Armenia" film was screened.
 - Folklore works of G. Gyurdjiyev at the Chamber Music Hall after Komitas performed for the first time by the folk instrumental ensemble – within the framework of "Culture of National Minorities" project in November 2008.
 - Publication of "Судьба – российский немец" [Destiny of the Russian German] (2008) and "Немецкие страницы истории России и Закавказии" [German Pages of Russian and Transcaucasus History] (2009) books upon the initiative of the German community and through state funding.
 - Third festival of "Children School Performances in the Russian language" held at the "House of Moscow" culture and business centre on 18 and 19 April 2009.
118. A step aimed at encouraging multiculturalism in the country and promoting the identity of national minorities is the youth festival named "Pop Rainbow of Armenia's National Minorities," which was held at the Aram Khachatryan Music Hall in February 2009. All the representatives of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia participated in the youth festival of "Pop Rainbow of Armenia's National Minorities." The festival was financed by the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and the "Center for Organizing Youth Events" state non-commercial organization, and organized with the support of the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia.

Article 6

1. *The Parties shall encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons' ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.*
2. *The Parties undertake to take appropriate measures to protect persons who may be subject to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence as a result of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity.*

119. In June 2007, the All-Armenian Catholicos Karekin II received at the Mother See Holy Etchmiadzin the members of the Coordination Council on National Minorities. During the meeting, the All-Armenian Catholicos urged the national minorities to preserve their national

identity and contribute their utmost to the well-being of Armenia, as loyal citizens of the Republic of Armenia.

120. On 17 December 2008, a presentation of small films (DigiTale), developed within the framework of “Imagine Your Future” project, was held at the Narekatsi Art Gallery of Yerevan. The small films were made by the representatives of ethnic groups living in Armenia and were dedicated to issues of concern and interest to them, their problems, thoughts, and even certain items. “Imagine Your Future” is part of the British Council’s “Living Together” project, the aim of which is to enable representatives of ethnic groups that are participants of the project to express themselves freely and raise issues relating to them and their ethnic community. Stories elaborated by the representatives of ethnic groups will be posted on different websites, broadcast via TV channels and will be open for public discussion during various events. The staff of the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia supported the UK Embassy in organizing the works.
121. Upon the initiative of the OSCE Office in Yerevan and the World Independent Youth Union NGO, with the support of the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, a one-week training course was held in Lusakerk on 29 July 2008, aimed at empowerment and development of leadership skills among the youth of national minorities of Armenia. This training course is part of the tolerance project, developed jointly by the OSCE Office and the Department.
122. On 20 March 2009, by the efforts of the Jewish community and the support of Yerevan Municipality, a "Friendship Alley" was opened in the Haghtanak [Victory] Park (the largest park in the city) situated on the Freedom Avenue of Yerevan, dedicated the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel.
123. Every year since 2004, and this year as well, the Syunik Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church invites non-governmental organizations of national minorities to organize leisure time of the children of national minorities together with the Armenian children in its camps, during the school summer vocation and camping seasons. The leisure time of children is organized by both the Armenian group leaders and representatives of national minorities. Since 2009, the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs under the Government of the Republic of Armenia is also engaged in the organizational works of the said events.
124. For the purpose of developing mutual cooperation and dialogue with the national minorities residing in the Republic of Armenia, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia has also organized the following events:
 - in 2006 and 2008: “Youth: Reality, Perspectives” republican youth conference;
 - in 2007 and 2008: “Dialogue of Cultures” intercultural youth festival;
 - in 2008: “Let us Learn more about Each Other” historical cognitive program;
 - in 2009: “Pop Rainbow of Armenia’s National Minorities”.
125. The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia has also assisted the “Iveria” community by supporting 15 youngsters who had received invitation to participate in the “Patriotic Camp” event held in Tbilisi, capital of Georgia, on 4-14 August 2008.
126. On 1 June 2008, the Children Protection Day, and within the framework of the October festivities dedicated to Erebuni-Yerevan, gala concerts were organized with the participation of national minorities.

127. With the support of Yerevan Municipality, the representatives of national minorities – Russians, Yezidis, Assyrians, Ukrainians, Greeks, and Georgians – exhibited their national-cultural works at the Yerevan’s History Museum on 19-22 November 2007.
128. On the occasion of the New Year, representatives of national minorities were invited and participated in the gala reception held at the City Hall of Yerevan.
129. Structural divisions of the Staff of Yerevan Municipality have carried out work to solve a number of social issues of national minorities: provision of support to socially vulnerable families, registration of unregistered births of children, obtaining and restoring relevant documents, etc.
130. It is henceforth planned to frequently cover the life, issues and problems of national minorities of Yerevan in *Yerevan 7 Days* newspaper of Yerevan’s City Hall and via program “The Capital” on Armnews TV channel.

Article 7

The Parties shall ensure respect for the right of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

131. Articles 26-29 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and relevant laws guarantee the rights of a person and a citizen to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, beliefs, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association and freedom of expression.
132. It is prescribed by Article 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia that everyone shall have the right to form associations, including the right to form and join trade unions. At the same time, it shall be mentioned that Article 47(2) envisages a limitation to the above freedoms, particularly stating: "The exercise of rights and freedoms with the purpose of violent overthrow of the constitutional order, provocation of national, racial, religious hatred, propaganda of violence or warfare shall be prohibited”.
133. In the reporting period, national minority organizations have submitted 10 notifications to the City Hall of Yerevan about holding public events, which were taken notice of, and the rallies and assemblies, as listed below, went on unhindered:
- Kurdistan committee – Rally (march) starting from the beginning of Mashtots Avenue to Mashtots Avenue-Amiryan street-Abovyan street route and further to Teryan-Moscovyan intersection; on 13 February 2004, at 12:00–15:00;
 - Kurdistan committee – Assembly in the intersection of Sayat-Nova and Charents streets; on 29 October 2004, at 12:00-14:00;
 - Kurdistan committee – Rally along the route of Azatutyun Square-Tumanyan street-Abovyan street-Hanrapetutyun Square; on 15 February 2005, at 13:00-15:00;
 - Kurdistan committee – Rally along the route of Azatutyun Square-Tumanyan street-Abovyan street-Hanrapetutyun Square; on 9 November 2005, at 12:00-15:00;
 - Kurdistan committee – Assembly near the Council of Europe Office, Davit Anghaght street; on 8 March 2006, 12:00-15:00;
 - Kurdistan committee – Rally along the route of Stepan Shahumyan Square-Vazgen Sargsyan street-UN Office; assembly near the UN Office; on 9 March 2007, at 13:00-15:00;

- Kurdish Council of Armenia – Rally along the route of Stepan Shahumyan Square to the UN Office; on 21 August 2007;
- Kurdistan committee – Rally along the route of Stepan Shahumyan Square to the UN office; on 15 November 2007, at 13:00-15:00;
- Kurdish Council of Armenia – Rally along the route of the area adjacent to the Opera and Ballet Theatre-Northern Avenue-Hanrapetutyun Square, or along the route of the City Hall-Shahumyan Square-Hanrapetutyun Square; on 28 October 2008, at 13:00-15:00;
- Kurdish Council of Armenia – Assembly at the Shahumyan Square; on 14 August 2009, at 13:00-14:00;
- “Harmonia” Russian cultural organization – Rally dedicated to the independence of the Republic of Armenia, from Saryan statue to Hanrapetutyun Square-Arno Babadjanyan music hall with participation of all communities of national minorities of Armenia; on 21 September 2009; at 12:00-13:00.

Article 8

The Parties undertake to recognize that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to manifest his or her religion or belief and to establish religious institutions, organizations and associations.

134. The amended Constitution of the Republic of Armenia of 2005 clearly lays down the principle of non-interference in mutual matters by authorities and religious organizations. In particular, Article 8.1 of the Constitution reads, “The church shall be separate from the state in the Republic of Armenia.” The Constitution envisages mutually beneficial cooperation between the state and different religious organizations and freedom of their activities stating the following: “Freedom of activity of all religious organizations functioning in the manner prescribed by the law shall be guaranteed in the Republic of Armenia”.
135. At the same time, the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia envisages the following: “The relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church may be regulated by the law”. Based on this provision of the Constitution, the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church” was adopted on 22 February 2007. The mentioned law was adopted considering the historical role of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the life of the Armenian people. Meanwhile, it should be mentioned that the provisions of the said Law by no means degrade the rights and freedoms of other religious organizations laid down by the legislation and the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia. This move of the state aims to compensate the harm inflicted on the Church in the years of atheism regime.
136. On 1 January 2009, the members of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia made proposals regarding the laws of the Republic of Armenia “On making amendements and supplements to the Law of the Republic of Armenia on freedom of conscience and religious organizations” and “On making amendments to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia.” The supplements made were aimed at bringing the said Law in line with the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia adopted in 2005 and in particular with Article 26 thereof, which reads: “Everyone shall have a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion”. This right includes the freedom to change religion or belief and freedom to manifest one’s religion or belief, either alone or in community with others, through church ceremonies and other rituals of worship. The exercise of this right may be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law, where it is necessary for public safety, health, and morals or for the rights and freedoms of others.”

137. The mentioned supplements were an important step aimed at clarifying and regulating human rights guarantees in accordance with the international commitments undertaken. To get an international expertise, the amendments to the mentioned laws were sent to the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) of the Council of Europe and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights for a joint opinion, which was given on 23 June 2009.
138. Amid various religions, the majority of Armenians, both in and outside of Armenia, are the followers of the national, namely Armenian Apostolic Church. Despite its dominant position, the Armenian Apostolic Church treats other religious beliefs with understanding, particularly as regards national minorities and their national religions.
139. In the years following its independence, Armenia undertook serious steps aimed at ensuring religious diversity in the country. In 1997, some 14 religious organizations were registered at the State Registry of Armenia, and in 2009, some 66 non-governmental organizations representing 13 religious denominations are registered. Religious organizations of religious national minorities of the Republic of Armenia are as follows:
- “Orthodox Community of the Russian Orthodox Church within Mother of God Church of Yerevan”;
 - “Orthodox Community of the Russian Orthodox Church within Gyumri St. Nicolas the Wonderworker Church”;
 - “Orthodox Community of the Russian Orthodox Church within Vanadzor St. Astvatsatsin (Mother of God) Church”;
 - “Orthodox Community of the Russian Orthodox Church of Martyrs St. Kirik and Elata Church of Dimitrov village (Ararat Marz of the Republic of Armenia)”;
 - “Yezidi (Sharfidini) Followers Religious Organization in Armenia”;
 - “Shekhi Shekhu Bakra” Yezidi national community of the Republic of Armenia;
 - “Jewish Religious Community of Armenia”;
 - “Saint Apostolic Church of East Assyrian Catholicosate” Assyrian Religious Organization of Armenia.
140. The Persian Blue Mosque also operates unhindered in Yerevan. Two Molokan communities without state registration are functioning in Fioletovo and Lermontovo villages of Lori marz. They do not wish to be registered, and the state does not oblige them to. The Georgian church, too, operates in Yerevan, and the territory for holding its religious rituals was provided by the Armenian Apostolic Church.
141. Relations between state institutions and religious organizations are coordinated by the Staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia in the manner prescribed by the law, through the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs. The Department conducts a wide array of work aimed at raising the awareness about religious rights of individuals and groups, addresses questions raised by religious organizations, helps resolve those, organizes discussions and conferences.
142. To create an atmosphere of tolerance and respect towards all religions and their value systems, the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs organizes annual discussions with the participation of all the religious communities functioning in the Republic of Armenia, mainly focusing on the formation of friendly relations between all the religious communities.

143. Considering that mutual cognizance is at the basis of tolerance and respect, literature dedicated to different religions was published in Armenia. Particularly, in 2006 the Archaeology and Ethnography Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia published the work “Beliefs of Yezidi Kurds” by A. Avdal. An almanac of Yezidi religious scripts - edited by G. Asatryan - was published. In 2006, the Qur’an was translated into Armenian and published (Translated by Edward Hakhverdyan). V. Arakelova authored the “Fundamentals of Shi’ism” (Yerevan, 1997). V. Khachatryan authored the “Islam”, published by the Theology Faculty of the Yerevan State University (Yerevan, 2007). “The Classic Assyrian Language” of A. Hakobyan was published in 2005. The mentioned publication is the first Armenian-language textbook dedicated to the Assyrian language - one of the oldest in the Middle East and one of the most important for the Christianity.
144. All the historical and architectural, cultural, and religious structures located within the territory of the Republic of Armenia are under state protection – irrespective of their ethnic or religious belonging. According to the Agency for Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, apart from historical monuments of the Armenian Apostolic Church (e.g. Pagan temple, Chalcedonian churches, etc.) in the territory of Armenia, the following monuments from among historical sites of worship of religious and ethnic communities still dwelling and already non-existent are under state protection:
- Armenian Catholic church in Gyumri, built in 1848-1855 by Rev. Kanonikos Araratyan;
 - Russian church in Vanadzor, built in 1895, reconstructed in 1977;
 - Russian church in Gyumri (Plplan Zham), built in 1904;
 - Russian church in Yerevan, built in 1913;
 - Blue Mosque (Gueoy Mosque), built in 1766. (Reconstructed in 1992, it is currently open for visitors. A library, museum, cultural centre, and a Persian Language School are functioning adjacent to the Mosque. The Blue Mosque of Yerevan is significant as an outstanding example of late Persian architecture in Trans-Caucasus);
 - Abas Mirza (Sardar) Mosque in Yerevan, built in late 19th century;
 - St. Kyril Church (Assyrian church), Ararat Marz, Dimitrov village, built in 1840;
 - St. Tovmas Church (Assyrian), Ararat marz, Verin Dvin village, build in late 19th century;
 - St. Sava Church (Greek church), Lori Marz, Shamlugh village, built in 1909. Significant as an example of a Greek church preserved in Armenia;
 - Greek churches in Hankavan (Kotayk marz) and Yaghdan village (Lori marz);
 - Jewish cemetery, 14-17th cc., Vayots Dzor marz, Yeghegnadzor region, South-Eastern edge of Yeghegis village, on the left bank of Yeghegis river;
 - Kurdish cemetery, 16-18th cc., Aragatsotn Marz, Aragats region, Ria Taza village.
145. The Government of the Republic of Armenia has adopted a number of decisions upon which return of a number of churches to the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Armenian Catholic Church of Armenia, the Saint Apostolic Church of the East Assyrian Catholicosate, and the Assyrian Religious Organizations of Armenia has continued.
146. In 2004, “Freedom of conscience, belief and conviction: rights, opportunities, and obligations” booklet was published, which contains the analysis of the religious situation in the Republic of Armenia, the list of religious organizations registered in the Republic of Armenia, provisions of the Constitution, international treaties and national laws of the Republic of Armenia regarding religion and belief.
147. The Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Alternative Service” is an important one among other laws and legal acts of the Republic of Armenia regulating the freedom of conscience,

belief, and conviction and the activity of religious organizations. The Law grants nationals subject to drafting for compulsory military service a right to pass an alternative service where the national's religious beliefs or convictions contradict mandatory military service in military units or bearing, keeping, maintaining and using arms. National minorities of the Republic of Armenia do not express a wish to avail themselves of this opportunity.

Article 9

- 1. The Parties undertake to recognize that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. The Parties shall ensure, within the framework of their legal systems, that persons belonging to a national minority are not discriminated against in their access to the media.*
- 2. Paragraph 1 shall not prevent Parties from requiring the licensing, without discrimination and based on objective criteria, of sound radio and television broadcasting, or cinema enterprises.*
- 3. The Parties shall not hinder the creation and the use of printed media by persons belonging to national minorities. In the legal framework of sound radio and television broadcasting, they shall ensure, as far as possible, and taking into account the provisions of paragraph 1, that persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media.*
- 4. In the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall adopt adequate measures in order to facilitate access to the media for persons belonging to national minorities and in order to promote tolerance and permit cultural pluralism.*

148. On 26 December 2008, Tigran Sargsyan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, had a meeting with the heads of non-governmental organizations of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. Heads of about 40 non-governmental organizations attended the meeting. They had an opportunity to personally voice their concerns and problems. The issues raised by the heads of national minorities were jointly discussed, and later the Department of Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia communicated its instructions to the relevant agencies.

149. The Department of Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia holds regular meetings with the representatives of non-governmental organizations of national minorities and pays visits to national minority communities. The issues of concern for national minorities are discussed during such meetings, where they become informed of the Framework Convention, as well as of other international instruments ratified, which cover the issues relating to the rights, as well as preservation and development of cultures and languages of national minorities. In 2008-2009, a series of meetings with the heads of non-governmental organizations of national minorities, namely Greek, Jewish, Kurdish, Yezidi, Assyrian, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Georgian, were arranged on the initiative of the Department. The issues of concern for the communities, projects implemented by non-governmental organizations, and the issues raised in the course of meetings have been discussed. As a result of the meetings, the problems raised have been formulated, the tasks were drawn and communicated to the relevant agencies. Some problems have been resolved, and the rest are still in the discussion phase.

150. The issues relating to national minorities are always in the focus of attention of Public Television. Problems of national minorities, as well as their historical and cultural events are regularly covered by “Haylur” news service. Daily programs in 13 languages are broadcasted on Public Radio (Russian-25 min., German-15 min., Assyrian-15 min., Kurdish-30 min., Yezidi-30 min., etc.). The events organized by national minorities are also covered by a 30-minute weekly radio program “Армения-наш общий дом” (Armenia is our common home), which is broadcasted on Public Radio.
151. The Public Radio has made a proposal to the Kurdish Community to jointly update the Kurdish musical archives.
152. Apart from the main news broadcast in Kurdish, Yezidi, Assyrian, Georgian, and Russian languages, there are also programs on cultural-historical and folkloric themes in national minority languages. In addition to broadcasting via public radio transmitters, the web-pages of the above-mentioned programs are also posted on www.armradio.am portal.
153. According to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On making supplements and amendments to the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Television and Radio” adopted on 26 December 2008, it is clearly prescribed that the Public Television and Public Radio shall be obliged to allocate not more than two hours weekly on television and not more than one hour daily of radio broadcasting for special programs in national minority languages.
154. In terms of mass media accessibility, the legislation of the Republic of Armenia does not envisage any differentiation for the citizens of the Republic of Armenia based on national belonging. The programs of television companies operating in the territory of the Republic of Armenia are equally accessible to everyone within their coverage areas.

Articles 10 and 11

Article 10

- 1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use freely and without interference his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing.*
- 2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if those persons so request and where such a request corresponds to a real need, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, the conditions which would make it possible to use the minority language in relations between those persons and the administrative authorities.*
- 3. The Parties undertake to guarantee the right of every person belonging to a national minority to be informed promptly, in a language which he or she understands, of the reasons for his or her arrest, and of the nature and cause of any accusation against him or her, and to defend himself or herself in this language, if necessary with the free assistance of an interpreter.*

Article 11

- 1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use his or her surname (patronym) and first names in the*

minority language and the right to official recognition of them, according to modalities provided for in their legal system.

2. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to display in his or her minority language signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature visible to the public.

3. In areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to a national minority, the Parties shall endeavour, in the framework of their legal system, including, where appropriate, agreements with other States, and taking into account their specific conditions, to display traditional local names, street names and other topographical indications intended for the public also in the minority language when there is a sufficient demand for such indications.

155. Article 15 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia prescribes that everyone - as well as any national minority representative - has the right to use, in the course of criminal proceedings, the language he/she masters. In that respect and in that period, the participant to the criminal proceedings, except for the body conducting the proceedings, who does not have command of the Armenian - the language of the criminal proceedings, may act in the language he/she masters and in that period he/she may have assistance of an interpreter, and in cases prescribed by the law such service is provided free of charge. Meanwhile, certain persons, who lack sufficient command of the language of criminal proceedings, shall receive a verified copy of those documents, which, in accordance with the law, should be delivered to them in the language they have command of. The said requirement indicated in the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenian applies to any person not having command of the language of the criminal proceedings, as well as to national minorities of the Republic of Armenia.

156. In 2007, an amendment to the Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia was made, according to which proceedings in the Republic of Armenia are held in the Armenian language. Persons participating in the case have the right to act in the court in the language they prefer if they provide interpretation into Armenian (Article 7).

157. In 2004-2009, no violations of the right of representatives of national minorities to act in their native language or any language they master were made by Police offices of the Republic of Armenia, as well as no criminal cases from courts or the Prosecutor's office on those grounds were returned for additional preliminary investigation.

Articles 12 and 14

Article 12

1. The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and research to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority.

2. In this context the Parties shall inter alia provide adequate opportunities for teacher training and access to textbooks, and facilitate contacts among students and teachers of different communities.

3. The Parties undertake to promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities.

Article 14

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to learn his or her minority language.

2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if there is sufficient demand, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible and within the framework of their education systems, that persons belonging to those minorities have adequate opportunities for being taught the minority language or for receiving instruction in this language.

3. Paragraph 2 of this article shall be implemented without prejudice to the learning of the official language or the teaching in this language.

158. Article 35 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia stipulates the right of each citizen to education; the secondary education in state educational establishments is free of charge. Each citizen shall have the right to get higher and other professional education in state educational establishments free of charge, on competitive basis.

159. The Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Public Education” was adopted on 10 July 2009, Article 4 of the Law stipulates that public education of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia may be organized in their mother tongue or national language with mandatory teaching of the Armenian language.

160. An order was issued by the Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Armenia on 21 December 2007, upon which amendments were introduced to the Order of the Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Armenia of 25 August 2003 on the Approval of the procedure on admission of students to general educational and special general educational establishments of the Republic of Armenia, and it was established that the children of citizens belonging to national minority are admitted to a general education school where education is carried out in the national language (mother tongue) of the child or to a school (class) which has courses taught in that language; whenever it is not available, the choice of the language of teaching shall be made by the parents of the child (his/her lawful representatives).

161. The curriculum of general education schools for national minorities is approved every year by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, which indicates the number of hours allocated for studying national languages, literature, culture, and history of national minorities. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia has elaborated a program and a timetable aimed at the development of education of national minorities, according to which each year textbooks are published for studying the language, literature, and culture of national minorities.

162. The following are the general education schools of the Republic of Armenia by regions where Yezidi language is taught:

Location	School
Aragatsotn	Sadunts
	Shenkani
	Kaniashir
	Miraque
	Telek
	Dedmasar
	Sorik
	Hako

	Kantch
	Arevut
	Michanlu
	Otevan
	Shamiram
	Hatsashen
Armavir	Tandzut
	Argavand
	Shenik
	Nalbandyan
	Karakert
	Arteni
	Dalarik
	Ardashar
	Yeghegnut
	Yeraskhahun
	Arshaluys
	Zvartnots
	Khandjyan
	N10
	Lukashin
	Ferik
	Lernamerdz
	Mrgastan
Ararat	Kaghtsrashen
	Noramarg
	Ranchpar
	Sarvanlar (Sis)
	Aygezard
	Aygepat
Kotayk	Nor-Geghi
	Zovuni
	Kanaqeravan
Shirak	Azatan
Yerevan	N101
	N107
	N95
	N108

Yezidi children are enrolled in Armenian classes and study Yezidi language as part of the school component.

163. The following are the general education schools of the Republic of Armenia by regions where Kurdish language is taught:

Location	School
Aragatsotn region	Alagyaz
	Avshen
	Tchartchakiz
	Miraque

	Shenkani
	Djamushlu
	Ria-Taza
	Kaniashir
	Sipan
	Midjnatun

Kurdish children are enrolled in Armenian classes and study Kurdish as part of the school component.

164. The following are the general education schools of the Republic of Armenia by regions where Greek language is taught:

Location	School
Yerevan	N74
Yerevan	N12
Yerevan	N132

Since 1996, Greek language is being taught on voluntary basis from 2nd to 9th grades at secondary school N12 of the city of Yerevan with the assistance and funding from the Embassy of Greece in Armenia. Since 1997, with the assistance of the Embassy of Greece in Armenia and upon the Order of the Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Armenia, Greek language is being taught in the from 2nd to 8th grades at secondary school N74 of the city of Yerevan as part of mandatory school subjects. Since 2007, Greek language is being taught at secondary school N132 of the city of Yerevan as part of study group hours, with the assistance of the Embassy of Greece in Armenia.

165. The following are the general education schools of the Republic of Armenia by regions where Assyrian language is taught:

Location	School
Yerevan	N8
Ararat Marz	Verin Dvin
	Dimitrov
Kotayk Marz	Arzni

Assyrian children mainly study in Russian-language classes, guided by special curriculum. Directors of schools of Arzni in Kotayk marz and Verin Dvin in Ararat marz are Assyrians by nationality.

166. See points 47-60 of the report on Russian-language education.

167. The applicants belonging to national minorities of the Republic of Armenia are admitted to higher educational establishments on equal basis, as well as based on requests submitted by the heads of national minorities.

168. The issue of admission of applicants upon request submitted by the heads of national minorities in a letter, is discussed during the sessions of the Republican Admission Commission set up upon the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. In the reporting period, upon the decisions adopted by the Republican Admission Commission the applicants of national minorities who had passed the exams with positive scores were admitted to relevant higher educational establishments with the major they applied for.

169. The applicants belonging to national minorities which were admitted on equal basis to state higher educational establishments benefit from all the privileges established by the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Education,” including participation in the rotation process in the higher educational institution, benefit from the right of tuition waiver in the prescribed manner, are provided with state scholarships, participate in inter- and intra-institutional exchanges - according to their preferences and in the manner established, participate in the admissions for graduate studies, etc.
170. In 2004-2009, the number of persons belonging to national minorities involved in higher educational institutions is 74, of which:
- State Agrarian University of Armenia: 3 Yezidi students;
 - Yerevan State University: 23 Yezidi, Assyrian, Russian, and Jewish students;
 - State Linguistic University after Bryusov: 2 Assyrian students;
 - Yerevan State Medical University: 8 Assyrian, Jewish, Yezidi, Kurd, and Russian students;
 - Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan: 12 students of which 2 Russian, 6 Assyrian, 2 Jewish, 1 Yezidi, and 1 Polish.
171. The following activities were carried out in the field of education of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, in particular:
- “A Model for General Education School (class) of National Minorities” for 2009 was elaborated and introduced, according to which 39 weekly course hours are allotted to the 1-11th grades for learning the language and literature of national minorities;
 - the concept and the program for the 1-11th grades of Yezidi language and literature was amended and adopted, which also includes materials on the history and culture of the Yezidi people;
 - Text books for the 4th and 5th grades for Yezidi language and literature were elaborated in 2008 based on the school program; they were published and distributed for free to the students of Yezidi Community; in 2009 text books for the 6th and 7th grades were published, and the text books for the 8th and 9th grades are planned to be published in the following years;
 - “The Concept and Program for Teaching Kurdish Language and Literature in the 1-10th grades” is undergoing an examination by experts; the National Kurdish Council of Armenia was proposed to bring the concept into compliance with 12-year education program requirements;
 - In 2009, a Model Curriculum for the 1-12th grades for the years 2009-2010 was elaborated and introduced for classes conducted in Russian and Assyrian at schools after Pushkin in the city of Yerevan, at schools of Arzni of Kotayk marz, Dimitrov of Ararat marz and schools of Verin Dvin;
 - In 2009, a criterion and a program for the 1-12th grades of “The Assyrian Language and Literature” was elaborated and adopted, which also includes materials on the history and culture of the Assyrian people;
 - In 2007, an Assyrian ABC book was elaborated, which was published and distributed for free to relevant schools, republishing of the "Read and Write in Assyrian" text-book and publishing of the “Speak Assyrian” text-book for the first grade is envisaged in the 2009 State Budget;
 - “Rights of National Minorities” and “Tolerance” thematic units were included in the criterion and program for “Social Science” course at general education schools;
 - Subject commissions on “Iranology” and “Semology” of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia operate for the purpose of assisting the educational needs of the Yezidis and Assyrians, and conducting examination of curricula, text books, and tutorials in relevant languages;

- for the purpose of considering educational issues of the national minorities and rendering service thereto, a Yezidi specialist was employed at the National Education Institute of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia;
- 30-hour training courses for Yezidi teachers (around 56 teachers) were regularly held.

172. Irrespective of the measures taken by the State which are aimed at providing the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia with teachers of their own, this issue was not fully solved in Russian Molokan, Yezidi, and Kurdish communities.

173. The strong adherence to cultural traditions among these people contributes to the incomplete education of children. Labor in Russian Molokan, Yezidi, and Kurdish communities is given prevalence over education. Children are engaged in agricultural activities from early age, they often miss classes (mainly in September and May); Yezidi children are engaged in cattle-breeding with their parents in mountains; Molokans help their parents in farming, cropping, spring sowing, etc.) or generally do not consider education as key to success in life.

174. In Yezidi and Kurdish communities the issue becomes even more complicated because of the discrimination expressed by the community in respect of girls. Most of the girls abandon schooling in early age.

175. In schools of Molokan villages there is no shortage of teachers as such. In these schools, the Russian language is mainly taught by Armenian teachers. In Yezidi and Kurdish villages there is a serious problem related to the shortage of teachers of the Yezidi and Kurdish languages. In fact, people teaching Yezidi at schools have only secondary or even eight-year education, and undergo training at the National Institute of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia occasionally.

176. The issue of overcoming such an approach towards education is in the focus of attention of relevant state authorities of the Republic of Armenia, such as the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, the Department of Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia and education divisions of marzpetarans. The latter have regular meetings with the representatives of the communities with the purpose of discussing the issue. School principals assert that they have several times informed the students and their parents of target study seats at Teacher Training College after A. Bakunts and relevant higher educational establishments of the Republic of Armenia where representatives of national minorities may obtain higher education and later work in their native community, however there was no reply so far.

177. The problem in the Republic of Armenia relating to the Yezidi and Kurdish ethnic self-consciousness had caused considerable problems for publishing of school textbooks. It has been decided to satisfy the requests of the two peoples, i.e. to publish textbooks in the Yezidi language for the Yezidis in Cyrillic alphabet, and in the Kurdish language for the Kurdish people in Latin Alphabet, taking into account also the fact that the Kurdish community finds that the Latin lettering will help them to communicate with the Kurdish international organizations and use Kurdish literature from abroad.

178. Among other things, the low level of education in the Yezidi and Kurdish communities is also conditioned by the fact that children come to the first grade without having command of the Armenian – the language of education. There are no kindergartens in these communities, as well as in many communities settled with Armenians. Village budgets are not sufficient for funding kindergartens. For this purpose, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic

of Armenia currently considers the possible options for opening preschool establishments in the Yezidi and Kurdish villages.

179. Activities are also carried out towards ensuring social protection for students. They are also carried out by some international organizations (World Vision, UN World Food Program (UNWFP), etc.). These programs include provision of food, clothing, and school supplies. The state provides free textbooks to the children of elementary classes of general education secondary schools (three years). Children of schools of national minorities are also provided with textbooks.

Article 13

- 1. Within the framework of their education systems, the Parties shall recognise that persons belonging to a national minority have the right to set up and to manage their own private educational and training establishments.*
- 2. The exercise of this right shall not entail any financial obligation for the Parties.*

180. Non-governmental organizations of national minorities in the Republic of Armenia have established Sunday schools which operate in their languages. As of 2009, there are Polish, Greek, Georgian, Jewish, Belarusian, and Ukrainian Sunday schools.

Article 15

The Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.

181. Article 30 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia stipulates that citizens of the Republic of Armenia who reached the age of eighteen shall have the right to suffrage and participation in referenda, as well as in the public management through their representatives elected through free expression of will, as well as the right to participate in self-governance process. According to Article 64 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia any person who has reached the age of twenty five, has been a citizen of the Republic of Armenia for the preceding five years, has permanently resided in the Republic for the preceding five years, and who has the right to vote, may be elected as a Member of the National Assembly.
182. Article 3 of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia in its turn prescribes that "Citizens with the right to vote shall have the right to vote and be voted regardless of their nationality, gender, language, religion, political and other views, social origin and property or other status." Any restriction of the right to vote on the basis of the above-mentioned criteria shall be prosecuted by the law." Article 4 ensures that citizens shall participate in elections on an equal basis and on equal conditions to exercise their right to vote.
183. The Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia in its turn stipulates that the indirect or direct infringement on rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen based on person's nationality, race, gender, language, religion, political or other views, social origin, property or any other status, which has caused damage to legal interests of a person shall be punishable by fine or imprisonment.

184. On 21 December 1993, the Republic of Armenia ratified Convention 111 of the International Labor Organization on “Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation” which entered into force on 29 July 1995 and the provisions of which are reflected in the relevant national legal acts of the Republic of Armenia.

Article 16

The Parties shall refrain from measures which alter the proportions of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities and are aimed at restricting the rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention.

185. The Government of the Republic of Armenia does not implement any policy and measures aimed at changing the structural composition of the population. In 2008, at the request of the population of Sorik village of Aragatsotn marz, the “National Yezidi Union” non-governmental organization applied to the Government of the Republic of Armenia to consider Sorik, Kantch, and Hako villages settled with the Yezidis as one community within the framework of the community enlargement program. The community enlargement program is ongoing, and it is envisaged to unify all the Yezidi villages in the same communities within the framework of the program.

Article 17

1. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and maintain free and peaceful contacts across frontiers with persons lawfully staying in other States, in particular those with whom they share an ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, or a common cultural heritage.

2. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in the activities of non-governmental organizations, both at the national and international levels.

186. On 27 April 2009, the third regional conference of organizations of Russian compatriots of the South Caucasus countries took place at the Metropol hotel. It was dedicated to the problems of preservation of the Russian identity, language, and culture. Members of the Federal Council of the Russian Federation, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, members of the organization of "Russian Compatriots" from Georgia, Ossetia and Abkhazia, officials from the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Armenia, Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, members of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, and other officials were invited. It should be noted that the previous two conferences took place in Baku and Tbilisi. Representatives of the Russian Community of the Republic of Armenia participated in those previous meetings. This year the Azerbaijani counterparts of the Russian Community did not participate in the conference since it was held in Armenia.

187. Each year the representatives of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia participate in international congresses and conferences.

Article 18

1. The Parties shall endeavour to conclude, where necessary, bilateral and multilateral agreements with other States, in particular neighbouring States, in order to ensure the protection of persons belonging to the national minorities concerned.

2. Where relevant, the Parties shall take measures to encourage transfrontier co-operation.

See the previous report.

Article 19

The Parties undertake to respect and implement the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention making, where necessary, only those limitations, restrictions or derogations which are provided for in international legal instruments, in particular the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in so far as they are relevant to the rights and freedoms flowing from the said principles.

188. The new Law “On Refugees and Asylum” adopted on 27 November 2008 by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia was developed through the collaboration of the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Armenia. The new law was adopted with the aim of bringing it into fullest compliance with the requirements of the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees, its Protocol and other international instruments.

189. The Law defines the notion of a “refugee” as follows:

“(a) a foreign citizen who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership to a particular social group or for political views, is outside the country of his/her citizenship and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of the country of citizenship; or who, being stateless and being outside of the country of his/her former permanent residence, is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to that country;

(b) a foreign citizen who was forced to leave his/her country of citizenship, and in case of a stateless person – his/her former place of permanent residence because of widespread violence, foreign attack, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other serious events breaching the public order.”

190. Article 27 of the same law stipulates that refugees who have received asylum in the Republic of Armenia, asylum seekers and members of their families in terms of selection of their place of residence and free movement in the territory of the State avail themselves of the same rights prescribed for the citizens of the Republic of Armenia.

Annex I
Urban/rural Distribution of the Population of Marzes of the Republic of Armenia according to Nationalities

(On the basis of the results of 2001 census in the Republic of Armenia)

/person/

	Total	Armenian	Assyrian	Yezidi	Greek	Russian	Ukrainian	Kurdish	Others
Armenia	3213011	3145354	3409	40620	1176	14660	1633	1519	4640
Urban	2066153	2041622	524	7413	853	10489	1386	315	3551
Rural	1146858	1103732	2885	33207	323	4171	247	1204	1089
Yerevan	1103488	1088389	239	4733	308	6684	876	92	2167
Aragatsotn	138301	130678	6	6405	3	179	24	846	160
Urban	32864	32666	2	70	2	74	11	0	39
Rural	105437	98012	4	6335	1	105	13	846	121
Ararat	272016	263357	1926	5940	11	418	70	32	262
Urban	79885	79178	94	279	7	195	30	21	81
Rural	192131	184179	1832	5661	4	223	40	11	181
Armavir	276233	257362	242	17665	15	480	74	128	267
Urban	98292	96864	60	966	10	234	32	16	110
Rural	177941	160498	182	16699	5	246	42	112	157
Gegharkunik	237650	236804	7	8	16	430	56	116	213
Urban	78957	78552	1	4	15	261	21	26	77
Rural	158693	158252	6	4	1	169	35	90	136
Lori	286408	280471	11	793	655	3882	138	9	449
Urban	169953	167465	9	639	398	1013	110	4	315
Rural	116455	113006	2	154	257	2869	28	5	134
Kotayk	272469	266023	950	4097	53	684	85	229	348
Urban	153981	152488	95	461	35	501	60	102	239
Rural	118488	113535	855	3636	18	183	25	127	109
Shirak	283389	280594	9	974	56	1048	222	7	479
Urban	174260	172535	9	258	50	868	182	0	358
Rural	109129	108059	0	716	6	180	40	7	121
Syunik	152684	152212	10	4	9	253	41	0	155
Urban	104147	103777	9	2	9	202	33	0	115
Rural	48537	48435	1	2	0	51	8	0	40
Vayots Dzor	55997	55877	4	0	1	71	16	1	27
Urban	19605	19533	3	0	1	39	12	0	17

Rural	36392	36344	1	0	0	32	4	1	10
Tavush	134376	133587	5	1	49	531	31	59	113
Urban	50721	50175	3	1	18	418	19	54	33
Rural	83655	83412	2	0	31	113	12	5	80

Annex II
Mechanical movement of the population of the Republic of Armenia in 2002-2008¹

year	Arriving								Departing							
	Assyrian	Yezidi	Armenian	Greek	Russian	Ukrainian	Others	Total	Assyrian	Yezidi	Armenian	Greek	Russian	Ukrainian	Others	Total
Total RA																
2002	11	95	9155	10	87	6	18	9382	22	247	10286	2	293	33	44	10927
2003	8	84	9605	2	100	10	18	9827	16	276	9003	1	194	27	31	9548
2004	8	68	9503	0	57	12	14	9662	12	263	8719	2	176	26	29	9227
2005	8	76	10291	0	55	6	5	10441	10	223	8903	3	127	8	29	9303
2006	7	71	8986	0	48	8	6	9126	5	126	7787	1	102	15	17	8053
2007	2	104	9645	2	34	3	5	9795	8	126	7206	0	92	7	22	7461
2008	6	141	10217	0	28	3	4	10399	3	75	6603	0	53	5	8	6747
town																
2002	3	14	5372	4	60	2	8	5463	6	80	7519	2	228	29	39	7903
2003	0	17	5606	2	64	3	18	5710	5	100	6557	1	158	24	24	6869
2004	4	9	5552	0	36	8	11	5620	3	92	6160	2	145	21	21	6444
2005	1	7	5729	0	24	6	2	5769	2	87	6266	3	101	8	25	6492
2006	3	10	5081	0	28	4	2	5128	2	44	5585	1	86	14	14	5746
2007	0	20	5334	1	25	2	4	5386	4	32	5070	0	78	7	15	5206
2008	2	17	5052	0	14	3	2	5090	1	17	4517	0	41	4	5	4585
village																
2002	8	81	3783	6	27	4	10	3919	16	167	2767	0	65	4	5	3024
2003	8	67	3999	0	36	7	0	4117	11	176	2446	0	36	3	7	2679
2004	4	59	3951	0	21	4	3	4042	9	171	2559	0	31	5	8	2783

¹ *) According to the data obtained as a result of statistical processing of the information provided by the territorial Passport Divisions of the Police of the Government of the Republic of Armenia

2005	7	69	4562	0	31	0	3	4672	8	136	2637	0	26	0	4	2811
2006	4	61	3905	0	20	4	4	3998	3	82	2202	0	16	1	3	2307
2007	2	84	4311	1	9	1	1	4409	4	94	2136	0	14	0	7	2255
2008	4	124	5165	0	14	0	2	5309	2	58	2086	0	12	1	3	2162

Annex 3

Holidays and events of community significance celebrated by the national minorities with the support of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (non exhaustive list)

Yezidi Community

“Khdrnavi” holiday
Malake Taus
Chle Havine
“Sultan Yezidi” holiday
“Shamsi” festival
Festivals and exhibitions

Kurdish Community

Jubilee evenings of Kurdish intellectuals
Navroz
Women’s holiday
Festivals and exhibitions

Russian Community

Christmas Day
Easter Day
Shrovetide
March 8
Club of the cheerful and sharp-witted
9th of May, Day of Honouring of Veterans of the Great Patriotic War
For the first time to the first grade
New Year’s Day
Seminars and conferences
Festivals and exhibitions

Assyrian Community

Event devoted to International Women’s Day
Sport event - competition between Assyrian-populated villages
Participation in pan-Assyrian games
Assyrian national traditional holidays
Assyrian New Year’s Day
Holly Cross
Maraz
Shara
Festivals and exhibitions

Polish Community

Christmas
Mothers’ and Grandmothers’ Day
Easter
“Polonia” Sunday school leaving party

1st of June - Children's Protection Day
Beginning of the school year
New Year's Day
Festivals and exhibitions

Ukrainian Community

Easter
Jubilee evenings of Ukrainian intellectuals
Ukraine's and Armenia's Independence Day
Anniversary of Holodomor in Ukraine
New Year's Day
Festivals and exhibitions

German Community

Christmas Day
Publishing
Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day
Festivals and exhibitions

Belarusian Community

Shrovetide
1st of May and 9th of May
Ivan Kupala
Belarus Independence Day
Day of Slavonic Writing
New Year's Day
Festivals and exhibitions

Georgian Community

Public and National Holidays
Summer camp
Excursion
Festivals and exhibitions

Jewish Community

Jewish Religious Holidays
Holocaust and Genocide Remembrance Day
Honouring of Veterans of the Patriotic War
Independence Day of the State of Israel
Rosh Hashanah
“Authorial traditional Jewish classical music in Armenia” project
Festivals and exhibitions

Greek Community

Christmas Day
Greek Independence Day
The Genocide of Greeks of Pontos
Easter
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Day of Liberation of Greece from Fascism