

**ARMENIA INDIVIDUAL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN
ASSESSMENT SPRING 2012**

Executive Summary

ASSESSMENT SPRING 2012

1. Armenia is an active Partner of the Alliance in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Armenia continued to implement its Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO over the past year. This is the sixth assessment of progress made by Armenia in the implementation of its IPAP. It is based on the new IPAP, agreed by NATO and Armenia in November 2011.
2. Over the past year, the political climate improved in Armenia, in part due to the Government's decision to allow the opposition access to the Freedom Square in Spring 2011. The 6 May 2012 parliamentary elections in the Republic of Armenia were characterized by a competitive, vibrant and largely peaceful campaign. At the same time, an unequal playing field due to violations of campaign provisions and cases of pressure on voters, as well as deficiencies in the complaints and appeals process were causes for concern.
3. Armenia has made some progress in judicial reforms. However, substantial concerns remain about the independence of the judiciary, the extensive powers of the Presidency in judicial appointments and disciplinary measures against judges, and the close ties between judges and prosecutors. Armenia did not make substantial progress on the key challenge to enhance the degree of pluralism in TV broadcasting. Whilst Armenia adopted an ambitious strategy in 2009, few genuine reforms have been implemented. Armenia should develop a new anti-corruption strategy with a strong mandate for a sufficiently independent body to monitor its implementation and to take action if implementation is failing. The Government continues to pay substantial attention to human rights issues; Key in this context is proper follow-up to ECHR verdicts.
4. A new Law on the Legal Regime of the State of Emergency, adopted in March 2012, reopened the debate on key provisions of the Constitution on the role of the armed forces during an internal crisis and on parliamentary involvement during states of emergency. The inclusion of new Members of Parliament in the Standing Committee on Defence, National Security and Internal Affairs following the recent parliamentary elections will offer new opportunities to strengthen the role of this body. Fuller access for MPs to government defence spending would be key in this regard. The Ministry of Defence continues to work towards enhanced transparency and a better link with civil society. These efforts should continue. A new military disciplinary code, adopted in March 2012, is a major step towards improved conditions of service for conscripts within the armed forces. At this stage, it will be important to ensure a broad information campaign within the armed

forces about the content of the code and ensure its implementation. The number of deaths under non-combat conditions in the military was lower in 2011 than in preceding years, but is still high, and concerns remain about hazing and other cases of mistreatment of conscripts by officers and fellow soldiers. The Police and the border security service have made substantial progress in developing a special civil service and thus "civilianizing" the security sector and as well in reducing the reliance on conscripts.

5. Armenia remained engaged in the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to broker a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. No further tangible progress has been reported. A high level of cease-fire violations along the Line of Contact and international border between Armenia and Azerbaijan (casualties occurred on both sides during 2012) underscores the volatility of the situation and the need for increased efforts by both sides to bridge the remaining differences on the basic principles for a peaceful settlement. The sides should refrain from statements likely to inflame tensions, including implicit and explicit threats of military action.

6. No additional progress has been achieved in the bilateral dialogue with Turkey, further to the bilateral documents signed in October 2009 on establishing diplomatic relations and on bilateral relations. At the same time, civil society contacts and (indirect) trade continue to develop.

7. Armenia substantially increased its contribution to ISAF in 2011. Armenia currently has 126 personnel deployed in two locations (Kunduz and Mazar-i-Sharif) in Afghanistan; five of these personnel are infantry trainers. Armenia withdrew its contingent of 35 personnel from KFOR in December 2011 as a result of the withdrawal of the support from its sponsor nation. Armenia is preparing to redeploy 1 platoon (37 personnel) to KFOR, under US command and control, to Camp Bondsteel in July 2012.

8. Armenia continues to make efforts to counter terrorism through implementation of an inter agency anti terrorism action plan. Key challenges are the strengthening of the legal framework to prevent, detect and prosecute money laundering. Armenia is developing policies and capabilities in the area of cyber security and recently established a State Cyber Security Committee. Armenia is keen to develop cooperation with NATO in this domain.

9. The plans of the State Border Force include the implementation of a new Border Security and Integrated State Border Management Strategy approved in 2010, and an Action Plan on Implementation of the Strategy on Border Security and State Border Integrated Management of the Republic of Armenia (2011-2015) approved in 2011 and circulated to Allies for information. Armenia is supported by EU advice and funding; UNDP is managing EU funding to implement the South Caucasus Integrated Border Management Project aimed at improving border security at the Georgian border. Other aspects are the enhancement of the border management information system, the development of intelligence and risk analysis system, and the modernisation of equipment.

10. In May 2011, Armenia completed the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) process which resulted in the Armed Forces Development Plan (2011-2015) underpinned by the necessary financial resources. The SDR recommendations include the refinement of the strategic planning and budgeting capabilities supported by more efficient procurement and acquisition mechanisms including improved auditing and outsourcing mechanisms. Efforts are continuing to improve personnel management for military personnel, qualifications of civilian personnel, as well as the military education and training systems. Armenia aims to strengthen the Peacekeeping Brigade's capacity in order to be able to sustain up to one battalion by 2015. Plans also cover further inter-ministerial coordination to improve governance, democratic control of the armed forces and the ability to respond to internal crisis. The defence industry will be rejuvenated so it can better support the armed force needs.

11. The Armenian government's public information efforts on cooperation with NATO continue, notably through the organization by the MFA of an annual NATO week. Public awareness is also raised through a number of NGOs in particular the NATO Information Centre in Yerevan. The Ministry of Defence is making further steps towards transparency, including through a renewed website. Armenia has continued to make progress in the area of civil emergency planning, but important structural challenges, including underfunding, remain.

ARMENIAN INDIVIDUAL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN ASSESSMENT 2012

INTRODUCTION

1. This is the sixth assessment of progress made by Armenia in the implementation of its Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO. It is based on a the new NATO-Armenia IPAP, which was agreed by NATO and Armenia on 4 November 2011 (PO(2011)0474).
2. This document, the first assessment of the progress achieved by Armenia in the implementation of its new IPAP, evaluates progress on the basis of the jointly agreed IPAP objectives and timelines. The assessment was developed on the basis of discussions held by an IS team from 27 February to 2 March 2012, and the IPAP self-assessment provided by Armenia. The assessment also builds substantially on the report on the PARP Partnership Goals for Armenia for 2012 (EAPC(C)D(2012)0002), approved on 18 April 2012.

PARTICIPATION IN PFP AND NATO-LED OPERATIONS

3. Armenia is an **active Partner** of the Alliance in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Armenia joined the PfP in 1994 and began participating in the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) in 2002. Armenia agreed its first IPAP with NATO in December 2005, a second in May 2009 and the third in November 2011. Armenia is a very active participant in PfP and plans to participate in some 190 activities in 2012¹.
4. Armenia is an active and steady **contributor to NATO-led operations**. Armenia has been contributing to KFOR since 2004. The Armenian platoon left Kosovo in late December 2011 as the agreement for bilateral support with Greece expired. Armenia is preparing to redeploy 1 platoon (37 personnel) to KFOR, under US command and control, to Camp Bondsteel. The deployment is planned for 6 July 2012. Armenia has contributed troops to ISAF since early 2010. Over the course of 2011, Armenia has substantially increased its contribution to ISAF, and now provides three light infantry platoons (serving with German forces in Kunduz, Regional Command North), as well as five instructors as a component of a German-Armenian OMLT for the Afghan National Army in Mazar-i-Sharif). Armenia also provides overflight rights and contingency host nation support to Allies for resupply of ISAF.

¹ The full list of selected activities is subject to updates and can be seen in ePRIME <https://prime.hq.nato.int>

CHAPTER 1: POLITICAL AND SECURITY-RELATED ISSUES

Cooperation with European and Euro-Atlantic structures and institutions, and relations with neighbours

5. Armenia has continued to participate in negotiations mediated by the three Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, France, Russia, and the United States, in order to achieve a negotiated settlement for the **Nagorno-Karabakh** conflict. Over the past year, the Minsk Group Co-Chairs continued their activities and visited the region on six occasions. On four occasions they crossed the line of contact by foot. The Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan met in March 2011 (in Sochi), in June 2011 (in Kazan), and then again in January 2012 (in Sochi). These meetings took place thanks to mediation by President Medvedev as Minsk Group Co-Chair. In the run-up to the meeting in Kazan, expectations were high that a breakthrough on the basic principles of a settlement might be reached. Eventually, this was not the case. Over the past year, efforts have also been made to define a mechanism to investigate cease-fire violations. However, concrete progress in this area is still awaited. Following their latest meeting in January 2012, the two Presidents expressed readiness to expedite the process to agree the Basic Principles, taking into account all the work so far. They also reaffirmed that in the context of the Nagorno Karabakh settlement, the development of humanitarian contacts is part of the confidence-building measures. They expressed readiness to encourage the establishment of a dialogue between the representatives of intelligentsia, scientific and social circles. Meanwhile, a high level of cease-fire violations along the Line of Contact and international border between Armenia and Azerbaijan (casualties occurred on both sides during 2012) continues to underscore the volatility of the situation and the need for increased efforts by both sides to bridge the remaining differences on the basic principles for a peaceful settlement. Both sides should refrain from statements likely to inflame tensions, including implicit and explicit threats of military action.

6. Armenia has good relations with **Russia**, including close ties in the political and economic spheres, as well as broad-ranging cooperation in the field of security. In August 2010, Armenia and Russia signed a new protocol to their agreement of 1995, extending the lease of the Russian military base in Armenia till 2044. Armenia is also a member of the CSTO. In September 2012, Armenia will host a key CSTO exercise on its territory.

7. Armenia maintains good relations with **Georgia**, with particular focus on economic, trade, energy and transportation cooperation. Cooperation in border management, with EU support, has been stepped up over 2011. However, no progress has been made over 2011 towards an agreement on border delimitation, and the mixed commission responsible for the negotiations did not meet. Georgia and Armenia initiated defence cooperation during 2011 and intend to enhance the number of cooperative events over 2012.

8. Further to the signature in October 2009 by **Armenia and Turkey** of two documents to improve relations (a "Protocol on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations" and a "Protocol on the Development of Relations"), ratification of these bilateral documents is

pending. Despite the absence of progress towards normalization of relations at the official level over the past year, contacts between the civil societies and (indirect) trade between the two countries have been enhanced. The latest Armenia-NATO IPAP restates Armenia's readiness to pursue efforts to normalization of relations with Turkey without preconditions.

9. Armenia has continued to maintain a broad **political dialogue with NATO** over the past year. On 6 March 2012, President Sargysan met with the NATO Secretary General and the North Atlantic Council for a strategic-level exchange of views in the run-up to the NATO Summit in Chicago. Foreign Minister Nalbandian and Defence Minister Ohanyan met with the North Atlantic Council in July 2011 to discuss the 2010-2011 IPAP assessment. They have also taken part in a number of NAC meetings in ISAF format over the past year. Colonel General Yuri Khachaturov, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Armenia, attended sessions in EAPC, KFOR and ISAF format of the Chiefs of Defence in January 2012. Meetings with Allies (28+1) in the PARP context took place in June 2011 and March 2012. The NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the South Caucasus and Central Asia Mr. Appathurai paid visits to Yerevan in June 2011 and February 2012. NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Planning and Policy Ambassador Dirioz visited Yerevan in March 2012. Major General Carlo Branco Director of the Cooperation and Regional Security Division of the IMS visited Yerevan in January 2012. Armenia attended many other meetings in ISAF and EAPC format. Armenia maintains close contact with the NATO Liaison Officer for the South Caucasus. Armenia is also actively considering hosting a seminar on NATO's new partnership policy in Yerevan during 2012.

10. Armenia's relations with the **European Union** continue to develop in the framework of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in place since 1999, and the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan, which was extended in November 2011. The EU also supports a number of key Ministries with policy, legal, and institutional advice through an EU Advisory Group, whose presence in Yerevan has been extended until 2014. The Advisory Group assists the Armenian authorities in the preparation of a process to negotiate, conclude, and implement an Association Agreement with the EU, including setting up a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. In addition, Armenia receives substantial financial assistance from the European Union (through Macro Financial Assistance and through the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument). Armenia has made substantial progress in negotiating an Association Agreement with the EU which is to succeed the PCA and include provisions for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. To date, some 22 out of 28 chapters of the Association Agreement have been provisionally closed. In February 2012, the EU also decided to launch negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with Armenia as well as negotiations on a visa facilitation and readmission agreement. Completion of the negotiations on an Association Agreement will still require a significant amount of time, partially due to the EU's expectation that Armenia will still need to make more progress in reducing state interference in corporate activities, allowing for more competition, and in strengthening private property protection legislation.

11. Armenia cooperates with the **Council of Europe** in a broad range of areas on the basis of an action plan for 2012-2014. As a permanent partner in the EU's Eastern Partnership initiative, the Council of Europe implements specific projects in Armenia in the areas of electoral standards, support to judicial reform, cooperation against cybercrime and fights against corruption. Armenian magistrates and lawyers are receiving training through the Council of Europe's programme Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP).

Democracy, Rule of Law, Fight Against Corruption and Human Rights

12. The **political climate** improved in Armenia during 2011, in part due to the Government decision to allow the opposition access to the Freedom Square in Spring 2011. Amendments to the electoral code of Armenia were adopted in May 2011. These amendments addressed some of the deficiencies identified in earlier reports by the Venice Commission and ODIHR (for instance in the areas of electoral disputes, and the conditions under which an election may be invalidated). Other deficiencies remain unaddressed such as excessive restrictions on candidacy rights; guarantees to separate party and candidate structures, improvements to the counting and tabulation processes ; and an improved complaints and appeals procedure.

13. The 6 May 2012 parliamentary **elections** in the Republic of Armenia were characterized by a competitive, vibrant, and largely peaceful campaign. At the same time, an unequal playing field due to violations of campaign provisions and cases of pressure on voters, as well as deficiencies in the complaints and appeals process were causes for concern. The elections were held under an improved legal framework and administered in an overall professional and transparent manner prior to election day. Election day was generally calm and peaceful, but marked by organizational problems and undue interference in the process, mostly by party representatives. The freedoms of assembly, expression, and movement were generally respected and candidates were, for the most part, able to campaign freely. The general lack of confidence among political parties and the general public in the integrity of the electoral process is an issue of great concern, despite all stakeholders underscoring their commitment to hold elections in accordance with international standards². The findings of the International Observers Mission should be acted upon by the Armenian authorities in preparation for the 2013 presidential elections.

14. Armenia has made some progress in **judicial reforms**. In March 2011, the Government adopted a concept for a new Criminal Procedure Code. The Government has also adopted a draft programme on legal and judicial reforms for 2012-2016. Meanwhile, a new draft Criminal Procedure Code has been drafted and made publicly available, but so

² As jointly reported by OSCE ODIHR, OSCE PA, PACE and EP international election observers in their preliminary conclusions of 6 May 2012.

far no public debate or reviews by international bodies have taken place. A draft Law on the Judicial Academy as well as amendments to ensure more impartiality in the selection of new judges are under consideration by the Government. Amendments to the Law on Advocacy regulating free legal aid were passed in a first hearing. However, substantial concerns remain about the independence of the judiciary, the extensive powers of the Presidency in judicial appointments and disciplinary measures against judges, and the close ties between judges and prosecutors (illustrated by acquittal rates of less than 1%). Further efforts are also required to ensure the newly established Special Investigative Service is truly independent and the service for compulsory enforcement of judicial acts is able to execute court decisions more effectively.

15. In the context of **freedom and diversity of the media**, Armenia did not make substantial progress on the key challenge to enhance the degree of pluralism in TV broadcasting. Armenia is encouraged to make best use of the Council of Europe project in this area to support the development of legal and institutional guarantees for freedom of expression, high quality journalism and a pluralistic media landscape in Armenia. Armenia decriminalized libel and insult in 2010. A substantial number of defamation cases emerged in 2011 mostly against print media, with courts frequently sentencing newspapers with substantial fines for moral damages. In response to an appeal by the Human Rights defender, the Constitutional Court upheld, in November 2011, the legality of the civil code in this domain, but narrowed somewhat its scope. The number of sentences for defamation has significantly reduced since.

16. After an interruption of nearly three years, the opposition was allowed to resume the holding of rallies at the Freedom Square in March 2011. This has helped to decrease tension between the opposition and, in May 2011, a new Law on **Freedom of Assembly** entered into force. However, there continue to be reports that people from outside Yerevan are on occasions restricted from attending events, as roads are blocked or public transport is restricted.

17. Armenia continues to participate in activities by GRECO and MONYEVAl to address corruption and money laundering. The **anti-corruption strategy** for 2009-2012 adopted by Armenia was ambitious, and many activities have taken place in enhancing corruption awareness and training and education of public officials with various international partners. However the strategy's overall implementation has been disappointing. Few genuine reforms have been implemented. The Government did not establish a Secretariat to support the Council responsible for the implementation of the Strategy. The Council met only rarely and the monitoring of the implementation has not been systematic as foreseen by the strategy. With the entry into force of the Law on Public Service on 1 January 2012, most of the remaining outstanding recommendations from GRECO Phase II were implemented. GRECO's Third Round Evaluation Report for Armenia (with 19 recommendations focusing on incriminations and transparency of party funding) is publicly available since April 2011. Armenia is to present a report on the implementation of the GRECO Phase III recommendations by 30 June 2012.

18. In its 2009-2012 anti-corruption strategy, Armenia set itself the goal to reach a score of 4.1 in the TI **Corruption Perception** Index by 2012. In 2011, it scored 2.6 (and was ranked 126) which was the same as the previous year. World Bank indicators similarly do not show a breakthrough in the fight against corruption.

19. Armenia is encouraged to develop a new anti-corruption strategy and a body which will receive a strong mandate to monitor its implementation and to take action if implementation is failing. This will also require sufficient secretarial support for this body. It will be important to enhance the number of successful prosecutions of high-profile corruption cases. Armenia may also want to consider participating more substantially in NATO's Building Integrity initiative.

20. The Government continues to pay substantial attention to **human rights** issues. It has taken measures to implement the Action Plan of the 2010 Interlaken Declaration that provides political guidance towards long-term effectiveness of the system of the European Court of Human Rights. In particular this means that Armenia should analyze the 25 ECHR verdicts involving Armenia to date and ensure that, in the cases when the ECHR ruled against Armenia, the necessary measures are taken to prevent further similar violations. Armenia also continued to participate in the UN Periodic Review and other international mechanism in the area of human rights in 2011 and engaged for the first time in a human rights dialogue with the European Union. Deficiencies in the rule of law domain continue to impact Armenia's overall human rights record. Of specific concern continue to be prison conditions due to overcrowding, pre-trial detention, ill-treatment during police interrogations, and trial procedures.

21. Armenia has a law on **Alternative military Service**, but few persons have requested such service in recent years, and some of the requests have led to court cases. Armenia should review both the substance and application of this law, taking into account the recommendation by the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance to make further efforts to establish a genuine alternative service of a clearly civilian nature and reduce the length of the service by six months.

Democratic oversight of the defence & security sector, military justice and human rights in the armed forces

22. In March 2012, the National Assembly of Armenia adopted a **Law on the Legal Regime of the State of Emergency** which covers, inter alia, the procedures by which the armed forces could be employed during an internal crisis. The Law reopened a debate on key provisions of the Constitution on the role of the armed forces during an internal crisis and parliamentary involvement during a state of emergency. Reviewing the Law, the Venice Commission stressed the principle that the Constitution and the legislation provide mechanisms – notably parliamentary and judiciary oversight over the executive – for preventing the abuse of emergency powers by national authorities. The third largest party of Armenia (ANC) has contested the Law arguing that the Constitution precludes any role for the armed forces in internal affairs.

23. Over 2011, the **Standing Committee on Defence, National Security and Internal Affairs** continued its role in overseeing the defence and security sector. In 2011, two parliamentary hearings were held during which NGOs presented the outcome of their monitoring of the defence area. The members of this Committee also receive the annual draft defence budget for consideration. However, the formal mandate of the Committee is fairly narrow (relating only to budgetary issues and ratification of international agreements) and only select groups of parliamentarians have access to detailed descriptions or justifications of government defence spending. The Committee has also not been substantially involved in the recent Strategic Defence Review. As a result of the May 2012 parliamentary elections, the Defence, National Security and Internal Affairs Committee will have a new composition. This will be an opportunity to strengthen the role of the Committee and reinvigorate its internal debate. The Committee may wish to consider as priorities : efforts to build up more expertise amongst MPs and support staff (including through more frequent visits to military units), continuation of the interaction with NGOs, and revisiting the Committee's mandate. New members of the Parliamentary Committee should also be offered an opportunity to familiarize themselves with NATO through a study visit.

24. Over the past year, the **Ministry of Defence** stepped up its external communications including through an improved website and continued its engagement with NGOs. The MoD has a functioning Public Council which aims to institutionalize a dialogue between the MoD and NGOs specialized in defence matters (see also paragraph 65). A public information document was issued upon the completion of the Strategic Defence Review. However, the Ministry of Defence continues to be viewed as a largely closed structure. The release of a broader range of documents is encouraged. Armenia's intention to declassify and publicly release the new IPAP is a welcome step. The Ministry of Defence has made good progress in introducing a civil service system within the MoD. The number of civilians working at the MOD was further enhanced during 2011. The Ministry now also has a civilian Defence Advisor in its Mission to NATO.

25. A new **military disciplinary code** was adopted in March 2012. In developing the code, Armenia has sought international advice including from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The new code regulates inter alia the responsibilities of the servicemen at all levels, including the commanders in ensuring military discipline. It defines procedures for imposing, implementing and cancelling rewards and disciplinary penalties. It also includes a procedure of appeal for servicemen subjected to disciplinary penalties. As opposed to the former code, the new code replaces the old penalty of "disciplinary isolation" (i.e. confinement) with the penalty of doing service in a separate disciplinary company with strict daily routine. These companies would be under the command of the Military police. The code also stipulates explicitly that no order or instruction can be given to servicemen which are beyond the powers of the one giving or receiving the order. The new code is a major step towards the improved conditions of service of conscripts within the armed forces. At this stage, it will be important to ensure a

broad information campaign within the armed forces about the content of the code and ensure its implementation.

26. Violations by commanders of the human rights of individual servicemen remain an important issue, in particular cases of violence towards conscripts. Armenia indicated that all military personnel receive **training on legal rights** inter alia during the classes in the Armenian Constitution, as part of a course on "Public – State Affairs". During these courses, all personnel are informed of their rights, including the right to approach the Ombudsman. Armenia receives support in this area from the OSCE which helps train instructors. Every unit includes an officer who is responsible for ensuring that human rights are respected within the unit. The OSCE manual covering Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Armed Forces Personnel was translated in Armenian with the support of the Yerevan OSCE office. At the end of 2011, an expert group under the auspices of the OSCE conducted lectures on this manual in military education institutions; the content of this manual will be included in the training curriculum of military education institutions during 2012. The MOD may also want to consider posting the manual on its website.

27. The number of **deaths under non-combat conditions** that occurred in the military was lower in 2011 than in preceding years, but remains high (some 26 over 2011). Concerns remain about hazing and other cases of mistreatment of conscripts by officers and fellow soldiers. Alongside full implementation of the new disciplinary code, the strengthening of the capacity of the Armenian armed forces to ensure unbiased and professional forensic investigations and analyses into these cases is of key importance.

28. Other agencies and services, in particular the police, including its police troops, and the border security service, have made progress in developing a **special civil service** and thus "civilianizing" the security sector and reducing the reliance on conscripts. The Police has significantly expanded the size of its special civil service (now well above 500 employees).

Combating Terrorism and Organized Crime and Cyber Defence

29. Armenia continued its efforts to combat **Terrorism**, although it estimates that the threat level for any attacks within its borders is relatively low. Armenia has not yet ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the prevention of Terrorism, signed in November 2005. A new National Programme on Combating Terrorism has been prepared but not yet approved. Meanwhile, Armenia continues to implement an inter-agency Action Plan for combating terrorism. This Action Plan aims at deepening inter-agency cooperation in preventing and combating terrorism, as well as in consequence management. It includes, inter alia, measures to establish common training standards for special forces, develop contingency plans for critical infrastructure objectives, and joint exercises. In practice, the focus seems to be primarily on joint exercises, as opposed to more structured day-to-day interagency cooperation. Armenia is also engaged in regional cooperation to respond to terrorist threats on the basis of the 2011-2013 CSTO cooperation plan to combat terrorism