



Statement by Sweden in the interactive dialogue on Armenia

*Delivered by Counsellor Anna Jakenberg Brinck,
Geneva, January 22, 2015*

Mr President,

Sweden welcomes the Armenian delegation to Geneva and the UPR process.

In February 2014, President Sargsyan approved Human Rights Strategy Action Plan 2014-2016. It is positive that the Plan exist, but it fails to address in full certain priority areas including the EU-convention against torture, electoral rights and anti-discrimination including women and children's rights. The plan overly focuses on adoption of laws and regulations, but does not have a clear monitoring, evaluation and coordination mechanism.

Sweden recommends Armenia to actively include civil society in the implementation of the Action Plan and to create a formalized dialogue with the civil society to this effect, in order provide for better monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan.

There were no significant developments during these last years in respect to securing the right to a fair trial. There are discussions regarding adoption of criteria for random assignment of cases, taking into account judges' specialization. This would be a positive step. However, the systemic problems that were raised during previous years persist. The independence and impartiality of the courts is not fully guaranteed. The courts are still dependent on the public prosecution service. The principle of equality of arms and adversial proceedings are regularly violated by the courts by manifestly being biased towards the prosecution. Claims about instances of torture and ill-treatment during pre-trial detentions persist.

Sweden recommends Armenia to work closely with the Council of Europe on judicial reform and support a system of court monitoring based on civil society participation.

Thank you, Mr. President