

MIGRATION

In response to the questions raised by the representatives of various countries and organizations, namely Algeria, Djibouti and China, I would like to inform that the Government of Armenia has identified the management of migration processes as one of its priority directions and tangible institutional and legislative reforms were made within the last years.

At the beginning of 2010, State Migration Service was formed, which in particular has been assigned with task to coordinate the policy development in the field of migration.

At the end of the same year, the Government adopted the Concept Paper for the Policy of State Regulation of Migration with its 14 priority areas and on the next year-the 2012-2016 Action Plan for its implementation with 147 concrete activities. In July 2014, the Government approved a new Action Plan incorporating 75 specific activities to harmonize the legislation of Armenia in the field of migration with international standards.

In June 2014, amendments to the Criminal Code of Armenia were adopted, whereby organizing illegal migration is defined as a criminal offence. The problem refers to those common cases, when individuals or institutions organize transfer of our nationals to foreign countries by violating immigration laws of the latter with a view to getting profit.

According to the new anti-trafficking law victims of human trafficking and their family members can be granted residence permit and access to the labor market, vocational training and education opportunities as well as receive support and protection.

The asylum system in Armenia is completely formed and fully functional. During recent years over 16 thousand refugees have arrived in Armenia from a number of conflict areas, including Iraq and Syria. A new Draft Law on Asylum developed jointly with UNHCR was submitted to the Government for consideration recently. And last, but not least, last year, through amending Criminal Code, the foreigners and stateless persons illegally crossing the border of Armenia are freed from criminal liability to enjoy the right to asylum.

In 2014, Armenia signed "UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families", which will be ratified soon.

Cooperation with the EU continues to expand. There is a solid legal basis for cooperation, specifically, the Political Declaration on Mobility Partnership, Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements.

Armenia is also actively involved in integration processes within the CIS region; coordinated steps are being taken towards management of population movements in accordance with an agreed policy. Since January 2, 2015, Armenia has become a member of the Eurasian Economic Union and as a result has joined the common labour market of the Member States of the Union.

The regulation of migration processes will constantly continue to be in the focus of my Government.

Thank you.