

MG

Monitoring Group of Human  
Rights Organizations

# ARMENIA

# DEMOCRACY

# AND HUMAN RIGHTS

# 2018-2023



# PROTEST ACTIONS

## POLICE VIOLENCE AND ARRESTS

Following the Karabakh trilateral statement on 10 November 2020, thousands of people took to the Armenian streets, and hundreds stormed the Parliament building in Yerevan. Numerous protests and marches took place worldwide, organised by the 17-party opposition coalition. Protests continued until May 2021, with demonstrations in Yerevan and other cities demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

More than 580 incidents of detention of demonstrators by the Armenian police were recorded from November 2020 to May 2021.

Police used force in an effort to overpower the protestors. Demonstrators and media representatives were subjected to physical attacks and insults. Garnik Petrosian (b.1993), one of the protesters who entered the Parliament building, was found dead under a bridge on November 13, 2020, an hour following his interrogation.

**Source:**

- “Yerevan protests: opposition demands resignation of PM and annulment of Karabakh agreement”, [Jam-news.net](#), 11.11.2020;
- “17 Armenian political parties demand resignation of Nikol Pashinyan and his team”, [Arminfo](#), 09.11.2020;
- “Rival Rallies In Yerevan As Armenia Reels From Nagorno-Karabakh Truce”, [Radio Free Europe](#), 18.11.2020;
- “Over 100 Detained During Opposition Rally in Yerevan”, [Civilnet.am](#), 11.12.2020

2020-2021

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Protests in Armenia began in early April 2022, over the implementation of the November 10, 2020 tripartite statement and the prospect of a potential peace treaty with Azerbaijan after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev met in Brussels, Belgium on April 6, 2022 for a joint summit hosted by the European Council. The protest movement was attended by activists from various internal opposition forces and the relatives of fallen and wounded servicemen from the Second Karabakh War. Protests continued until June, with demonstrations in Yerevan and other cities demanding the resignation of the government. Police detained dozens of protesters who marched and blocked roads in Armenia's capital Yerevan, calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

According to official data, as of June 6, 2022, more than 2100 participants had been detained. Police treated both protesters and the media covering the events with such force that activists described it as “brutal.” During rallies on Proshyan Street, the police fired expired stun grenades against the protesters, injuring dozens of people.

Source: “Armenian police arrest hundreds as protests grow”, [Eurasianet.org](https://eurasianet.org), 02.05.2022;  
“Armenian opposition rallies ahead of Pashinyan-Aliyev meeting”, [Eurasianet.org](https://eurasianet.org), 06.04.2022;  
“Лидер протестов в Армении назвал общее число задержанных и арестованных”, [Regnum.ru](https://regnum.ru), 06.06.2022

2022



# RALLY

## BRUTALITY DURING THE RALLY

From May 1, 2022, thousands of demonstrators, demanding the resignation of Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, took to the streets of Yerevan, staging acts of civil disobedience, marching, holding sit-ins, and attempting to block major thoroughfares in the capital's downtown. On May 2, police in Yerevan detained at least 244 demonstrators, many on charges of refusing to obey official orders. By May 3, at least 70 demonstrators were detained, according to a police spokesman.

May 1-3, 2022

Source: "Armenian police arrest hundreds as protests grow", Eurasianet.org, 02.05.2022



The police used force against Ishkhan Saghatelyan, Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia during an act of disobedience in Yerevan, Armenia.

May 17, 2022

Source: Protesters of the 'Resistance' movement closed a number of streets since the morning, expressing their protest against the current Government. Yerevan, Armenia. [Photolure.am](https://www.photolure.am), 17.02.2022

The police detained the protestors of the "Resistance" movement who blocked the streets of Yerevan, demonstrating against the current government.

May 17, 2022

Source: Protesters of the 'Resistance' movement closed a number of streets since the morning, expressing their protest against the current Government. Yerevan, Armenia. [Photolure.am](https://www.photolure.am), 17.02.2022

The police detained Tadevos Avetisyan, a deputy from the "Armenia" faction, during an action of disobedience in Yerevan, Armenia.

May 17, 2022

Source: "Gegham Manukyan: Armenian police 'kidnapped' MP Tadevos Avetisyan", [Panorama.am](https://www.panorama.am), 17.05.2022



# PHOTOS FROM THE RALLY



# PHOTOS FROM THE RALLY



# PHOTOS FROM THE RALLY



# POLITICAL PERSECUTION AND ARRESTS



3RD  
PRESIDENT  
OF ARMENIA

SERZH  
SARGSYAN

Serzh Sargsyan's property remains impounded. The former president resigned in 2018 under the pressure of mass protests and was accused of organising embezzlement of about 500 million drams. Back in 2019, he was charged on grounds of claim 1, part 3, art. 38-179 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia, as an act dangerous to society. Serzh Sargsyan's lawyers continue to insist that this case is a political order. Sargsyan himself called the case "absurd" and "fabricated."

Seizure of property: May 18, 2021

Source: "Serzh Sargsyan accused of organizing embezzlement on an especially large scale", *Arminfo*, 04.12.2019;

"В Ереванском суде продолжается процесс по делу Сержа Саргсяна и других", *Armenia Today*, 05.08.2021



SERZH  
SARGSYAN'S  
BROTHER

## LEVON SARGSYAN

In July 2018, Levon Sargsyan, his daughter and his son were declared wanted. They were charged with concealing property and assets that are subject to declaration.

In September 2019, a court issued an arrest warrant for Former President Serzh Sargsyan's brother Lyova Sargsyan. Criminal charges are pressed against Levon (Lyova) Sargsyan in the investigation of the development and implementation of the North-South Road Corridor project. According to the investigation, Lyova Sargsyan has interfered in the process of selecting a sub-contractor for the project. He was serving as ambassador-at-large at the foreign ministry at that time. He is accused of demanding 50% of expected profits from a company involved and laundered the money. **Lyova Sargsyan is currently wanted. Two others – executives of a sub-contractor company and accomplices of Sargsyan in the scheme are also wanted on similar charges. Lyova Sargsyan is indicted on charges of money laundering and bribery.** There is still another outstanding arrest warrant for him since 2018 on charges of illicit enrichment and false asset declaration. He is believed to be outside Armenia.

July, 2018

Source: "Former Armenian President Sargsyan's entourage under scrutiny of law enforcement agencies", [Jam-news.net](https://jam-news.net), 13.07.2019



SERZH  
SARGSYAN'S  
BROTHER

## ALEXANDER SARGSYAN

After the 2018 change of government in Armenia, law enforcement focused their attention on Alexander Sargsyan and his son Hayk. In June 2018, he was charged with illegal arms possession, although he was released a few hours later. On July 11, a Yerevan court decided to detain Hayk Sargsyan. He was released on 50 million AMD bail in September. Hayk still faces charges of illegal arms possession and attempted murder. In July 2018, the property of Aleksander Sargsyan was seized, following the decision of the investigative department of the National Security Service of Armenia. He was required to return US\$30 million to the state coffers. By February 2019, Alexander Sargsyan had returned US\$19.6 million to the state coffers.

June, 2018

Source: "Serzh Sargsyan's Brother Accused of Fraud Donated 19.6 Million USD to Defense Army of Artsakh", [Lragir](#), 27.02.2019



FORMER PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
CONSTITUTIONAL  
COURT OF ARMENIA

## HRAYR TOVMASYAN

On October 4, 2019, the Armenian Parliament adopted a resolution requesting the Constitutional Court to oust Hrayr Tovmasyan, President of the Constitutional Court of Armenia. However, the Constitutional Court made a decision to reject the motion proposed by the Parliament. On February 6, 2020, a law on amending the Constitution to dismiss him from office was passed by a majority of the parliamentary ruling party.

In early 2020, a constitutional amendment was made by the Pashinyan government to legally remove Hrayr Tovmasyan, widely regarded as the last remaining high-ranking official from the former government, from his position as Chair of the Constitutional Court. First, a referendum was scheduled, and propaganda began to favour the ruling party. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to continue this. Instead, following the voting in the Parliament, the bill on the constitutional amendment was adopted. According to the constitutional amendment that entered into force on June 26, the composition of the Constitutional Court was renewed, and Hrayr Tovmasyan was dismissed from the position of the court chairman and became an ordinary member. On September 7, 2022, Hrayr Tovmasyan, the judge of the Constitutional Court, his wife Lamara Khudaverdyan, daughters Gohar and Meri Tovmasyan, and two more related persons—Sona Khudaverdyan and Rubik Ghazaryan—have been summoned to the Department for Confiscation of Property of Illicit Origin of the Prosecutor General's Office.

October 4, 2019

Source: “Constitutional Court rejects parliament’s motion on ousting Hrayr Tovmasyan”, [Armenpress.am](#) 14.10.2019;

“Armenian Parliament votes to strip powers from head of constitutional court”, [Oc-media](#), 10.10.2019;

“Armenia To Hold Referendum On Constitutional Court Amid Spat With Pashinyan”, [Mirrorspectator](#), 11.02.2020



FORMER HEAD OF  
ARMENIA'S NATIONAL  
SECURITY SERVICE (NSS)  
IN THE FINAL YEARS OF  
FORMER PRESIDENT  
SERZH SARKISIAN'S RULE

## GEORGI KUTOYAN

In January 2020, Kutoyan's body was found in his Yerevan flat. Local media reported that they were close friends with Hrayr Tovmasyan. Forrights.am stated that Georgi Kutoyan, former head of Armenia's NSS, who was Sargsyan's third advisor, was assassinated. This follows 49-year-old Gagik Poghosyan, head of Serzh Sargsyan's control service and adviser, who was killed in 2001. The second was Gevork Mheryan, a 33-year-old deputy police chief, who was killed in 2009.

January, 2020

Source: "Georgi Kutoyan appointed as Director of National Security Service of Armenia", [Armenpress.am](https://armenpress.am), 12.02.2016;

"Death of former security official mystifies Armenia", [Eurasianet.org](https://eurasianet.org), 20.01.2020



FORMER  
JUSTICE  
MINISTRY  
OFFICIAL

## NORAYR PANOSYAN

On 26 December, Norayr Panosyan (Godson of Hrayr Tovmasyan, President of the Constitutional Court of Armenia), and Head of the Staff Overseeing Agency at the Ministry of Justice during Tovmasyan's tenure, was arrested and charged with abuse of power. He was accused of the same crimes as Hrayr Tovmasyan: abusing his authority to obtain land belonging to notary officials through pressure and intimidation. On 11 February, 2020, Court of Appeal ruled to release the former head of justice ministry's legality control inspection (2011-2014) Norayr Panosyan, godson of CC chairman Hrayr Tomvasyan.

He was previously arrested on October 1, 2019, but subsequently, by decision of the Court of Appeal, he was released on November 6, 2019.

October 1, 2019

Source: "New charge brought against Norayr Panosyan, whose best man is Armenia Constitutional Court President", [News.am](#), 26.12.2019;

"Attorneys appeal court decision on detaining Norayr Panosyan, whose best man is Armenia Constitutional Court President", [News.am](#), 13.01.2020



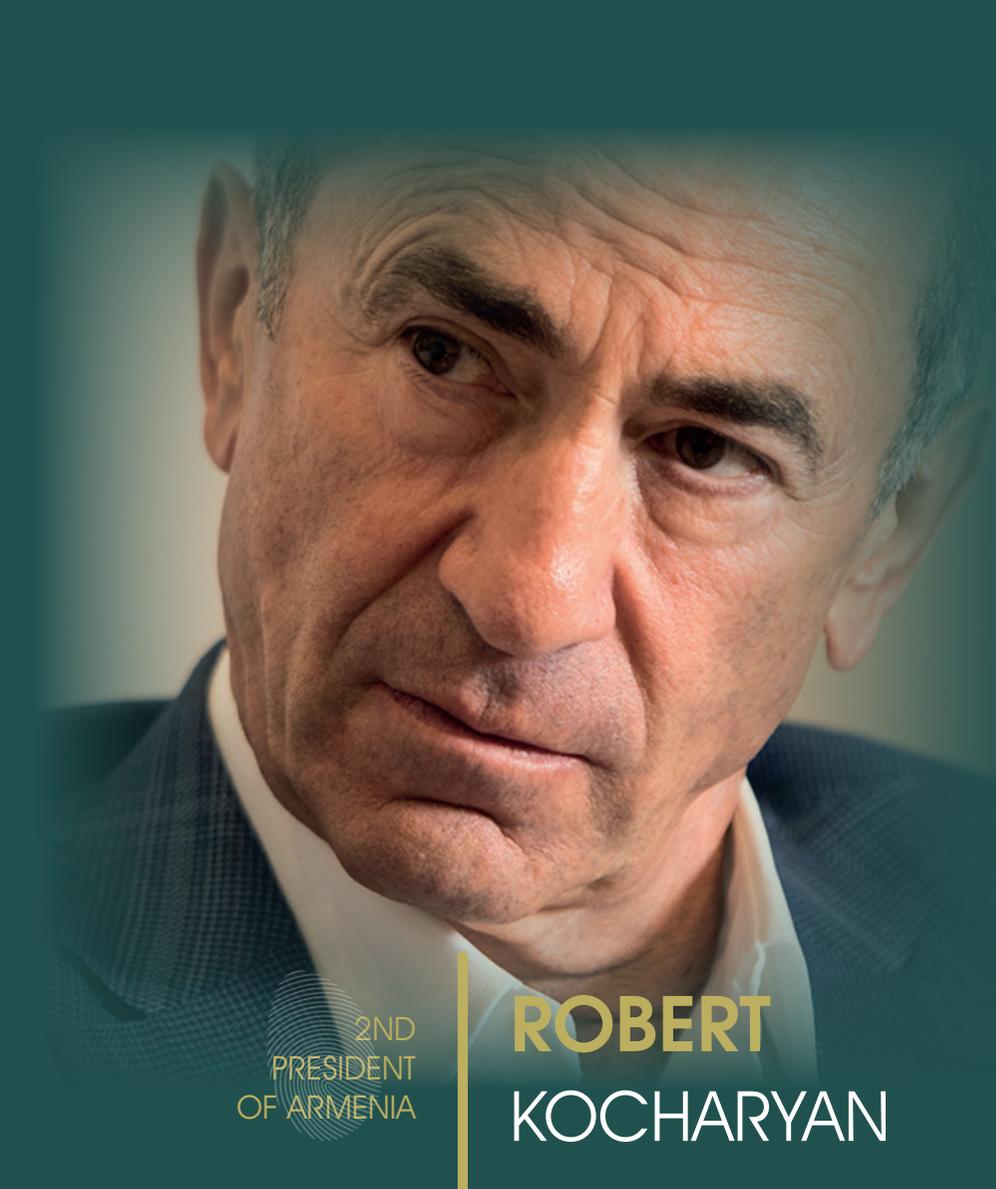
JUDGE

## SAMVEL UZUNYAN

Judge Samvel Uzunyan was placed on the wanted list, after his departure from Armenia became known. Earlier, the Supreme Judicial Council of the Republic of Armenia granted a petition for his criminal prosecution and imprisonment. For its part, the court granted a motion to choose preventive measures in the form of an arrest. A criminal case was opened regarding the fact of Judge Samvel Uzunyan crossing the state border. The media connected the criminal prosecution of Uzunyan, who was also a judge in the case of the terrorist act in parliament on October 27, 1999, with a recent NSS report on the detection of bribery cases during 2007-09 involving senior officials, whose names remain undisclosed.

December, 2019

Source: "Armenia ex-judge declared wanted", [News.am](#), 23.12.2019



2ND  
PRESIDENT  
OF ARMENIA

# ROBERT KOCHARYAN

On July 26, 2018, shortly after Nikol Pashinyan ascended to power in Armenia, Robert Kocharyan, the Second President of Armenia, was charged in connection with the events that took place on March 1–2, 2008 in Yerevan. This charge was brought regarding the overthrow of the constitutional order by alleged collaboration with other persons. The ex-president spent more than 500 days under arrest. In June 2020, he was released on bail and, in March 2021, the Constitutional Court of Armenia found Article 300.1 of the Criminal Code of Armenia unconstitutional, under which Kocharyan had been accused of overthrowing the state system. However, the criminal prosecutions on bribery charges continued.

July 28, 2018

Source: "Armenia ex-President Robert Kocharyan is acquitted", News.am, 07.04.2021



HEAD OF THE  
"HAYASTAN"  
FACTION

## SEYRAN OHANYAN

Seyran Ohanyan, the former Minister of Defence of Armenia and Head of the "Hayastan" faction was declared a defendant in several criminal cases. On February 8 the National Assembly granted three requests from the Prosecutor-General to initiate criminal cases against him, thereby depriving him of parliamentary immunity. Seyran Ohanyan is accused of abuse of power and waste of national resources and manpower during his tenure as Defence Minister. The National Assembly voted through a secret ballot to allow the initiation of criminal prosecution against Seyran Ohanyan.

February 8, 2023

Source: "What the ex-minister of defense, now one of the leaders of the opposition in Armenia is accused of?", [Jam-news.net](https://jam-news.net), 08.02.2023;

"Armenia ex-defense minister Seyran Ohanyan charged", [News.am](https://news.am), 13.02.2023;

"Lawmakers give consent to initiating criminal prosecution against former Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan", [Armradio.am](https://armradio.am), 08.02.2023



FORMER MAYOR OF  
THE CITY OF SISIAN,  
MP FROM THE  
"ARMENIA" FACTION

## ARTUR SARGSYAN

Artur Sargsyan, Former Head of the Sisian community of the Republic of Armenia, was arrested on July 16, 2021, after participating in parliamentary elections on June 20. According to the investigating authority, Sargsyan was accused of abuse of official capacity since beginning his tenure on October 7, 2016. Sargsyan did not admit his guilt and considered his detention to be political persecution. He was released on October 14 on bail of 20 million drams and began to participate in the work of the National Assembly of Armenia. However, on November 15, the Criminal Court of Appeal in Yerevan arrested him again. According to Sargsyan's attorney Emin Khachatryan, the Court's decision had been made to hold an emergency meeting, which meant that the defence did not have the opportunity to express its point of view. The attorney considered Judge Armen Danielyan to have violated all the principles and norms of criminal law. On December 10, under the decision of the Constitutional Court, Artur Sargsyan was released.

Date of arrest: November 15, 2021

Source: "Armenian opposition MPs released after Constitutional Court ruling", [Jam-news.net](#), 11.12.2021;

"Arthur Sargsyan, released from arrest, took oath of MP", [Arminfo](#), 26.10.2021



OPPOSITION  
ACTIVIST AND  
PUBLIC FIGURE

## AVETIK CHALABYAN

Chalabyan was placed under arrest for allegedly trying to bribe students of the Armenian National Agrarian University to participate in anti-government protests in Yerevan.

On August 31, Avetik Chalabyan was released from custody on bail of 15 million drams, following the Armenian Court of Appeal decision, chaired by Judge Ruzanna Barseghyan. His lawyer commented: “This case should be included in the annual or extraordinary reports of international human rights organisations”.

“Although I was released yesterday, the struggle for the final establishment of justice continues. The fabricated criminal case against me is still ongoing, and our goal will be to prove the invalidity of the charges and obtain my final acquittal, even if it takes years and great efforts in the future,” Chalabyan said.

July, 2022

Source: “Avetik Chalabyan released from custody on bail of 15 million drams”, [Arminfo](#), 31.08.2022;

“Аветик Чалабян: Хотя вчера я и вышел на свободу, однако борьба за окончательное установление справедливости продолжается”, [Panorama.am](#), 28.07.2022



FORMER  
PROSECUTOR  
GENERAL OF  
ARMENIA

## GEVORK KOSTANYAN

Gevork Kostanyan was accused of forging documents in relation to the events of March 1, 2008 and an arrest warrant was issued. But on April 16, 2022, the Constitutional Court of Armenia decided to terminate the proceedings. In July 2022, the Prosecutor General's Office of Armenia summoned Kostanyan and his family members for questioning in the case of illegally acquired property.

On January 10, 2023, the Prosecutor General's Office of Armenia appealed to the Anti-Corruption Court with a demand to confiscate at least three units of real estate from the former prosecutor Gevork Kostanyan and those associated with him. The Department for Confiscation of Property of Illicit Origin, in particular, demanded to take away one apartment in Yerevan, and two mansions - in the communities of Tsakhkadzor and Jrvezh of Kotayk region. If the confiscation is not possible, then the department proposes to recover the value of the property (at the average market price), which is 363.6 million drams (\$909,000).

### 2019

Source: "Former Prosecutor General Gevorg Kostanyan declared wanted", [Armenpress.am](https://armenpress.am), 28.11.2019;

"Our work is not about hoping: Attorney General on Russia's consent to arrest Gevorg Kostanyan", [Aysor.am](https://aysor.am) 29.11.2019

"Armenian Prosecutors Seek to Confiscate Illegally Acquired Assets from Former Chief Prosecutor and Former Mayor of Yerevan", [Massispost.com](https://massispost.com), 12.01.2023



FORMER  
MINISTER OF  
DEFENSE,  
COLONEL  
GENERAL

## MIKAEL KHARUTYUNYAN

Mikael Kharutyunyan was accused of breaching a constitutional order during the events of March 1, 2008. On December 12, 2018, preventive measures were defined and an international arrest warrant was issued. Mikael Harutyunyan is a citizen of Russia. According to the information disseminated by the Russian media, an international search warrant issued in on the territory of Russia was cancelled.

December 12, 2018

Source: "Russia cancels search for Armenia ex-Minister Mikael Harutyunyan", [News.am](#), 08.09.2019



FORMER CSTO  
SECRETARY GENERAL,  
CHIEF OF THE  
GENERAL STAFF OF  
THE ARMED FORCES  
OF ARMENIA

## YURI KHACHATUROV

Yuri Khachaturov was arrested on July 26, 2018, and charged with "overthrowing the constitutional system" in connection with his actions during the March 1 events. Two days later, Davit Balayan, Prosecutor of the Yerevan General Jurisdiction Court allowed Khachaturov to apply for bail and he was released from custody on bail of 5 million drams. On November 2.2018, he returned to Armenia a few days after being relieved of the post of Secretary General of the CSTO.

July 26, 2018

Source: "BREAKING: Armenian prosecutors seek arrest of CSTO Secretary General", [Armenpress.am](#), 27.07.2018;

"Armenian General Released On Bail, Charged In Connection With 2008 Election Violence", [Radio Free Europe](#), 27.07.2018



THE FORMER  
COMMANDER OF  
THE 3RD ARMY  
CORPS OF THE  
ARMENIAN ARMED  
FORCES

## GRIGORY KHACHATUROV

On February 21, 2023, the General Prosecutor's Office of Armenia presented some details of the criminal case and the detention of Major General Grigory Khachaturov, the former commander of the 3rd Army Corps of the Armenian Armed Forces. The Investigative Department of the Republic's National Security Service (NSS) investigated the case. The explanation of the supervisory authority noted that the actions charged against Khachaturov took place in 2006–2010 when he was the commander of one of the military units. It is about the alleged abuse of office and the legalization of large real estate holdings (money laundering). On the same day, Grigory Khachaturov was set free one day after being arrested on charges strongly denied by him. Armenia's Anti-Corruption Court refused to allow the National Security Service (NSS) to hold Grigori Khachaturov in detention pending an investigation. It should be noted that Major General Grigory Khachaturov was among dozens of high-ranking army officers who signed a statement in February 2021, demanding the resignation of the government and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, following the Armenian military defeat in the 2020 Karabakh war.

February 21, 2023

Source: "Are former defense ministers being persecuted in Armenia? Opinion of opposition and expert", [Jam-news.net](https://jam-news.net), 22.02.2023



PHOTO



POLITICAL  
CITIZEN

# IGOR KHACHATUROV

Igor Khachaturov, son of Yuri Khachaturov, was arrested in July 2022 and was released on bail after two months of imprisonment. The reason for his detention was his participation in the protests held by the opposition on May 17 and his disobeying police orders. In November 2022, the Armenian Prosecutor General filed a petition to arrest Yuri Khachaturov's son. The court of cassation did not grant the request.

Date of arrest: May 17, 2022

Source: "Detention Of Khachaturov's Son Upheld On Assault Charge During Yerevan Protests", [Radio Free Europe](#), 20.05.2022

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF ARARAT REGIONAL  
COMMITTEE OF THE DASHNAKTSUTYUN PARTY



**GARNIK**  
MANUKYAN



**ARTAVAZD**  
MARGARYAN

**HUNAN**  
MELKONYAN

## ENTRY BAN TO ARMENIA FOR A POLITICAL VIEW

On January 12, 2023, active members of the Ararat regional committee of the Dashnaktsutyun party, Garnik Manukyan and Artavazd (Ashot) Margaryan, party supporter Hunan Melkonyan, and the chairman of the Supreme Body of the Party, Simon Simonyan, were illegally interrogated, together with Gerasim Vardanyan, who was released by a court decision. Their apartments were also searched. Garnik Manukyan, a member of the Ararat regional committee of the Dashnaktsutyun party, was detained in Armenia on January 14, 2022. The decision was made by the Court of General jurisdiction in Artashat. The activist was arrested for two months.

January, 2022-23

Source: ““The Armenian government of the day is preparing another step to destroy the nation”. ARF statement”, [Gagrulenet](https://gagrulenet.com), 12.01.2023



FORMER  
DEPUTY OF  
THE ARMENIAN  
PARLIAMENT

## ABRAHAM MANUKYAN

Abraham Manukyan, Former Deputy of the Armenian Parliament, was arrested on June 17, 2020. He was charged for assisting to give electoral bribes in accordance with Part 2 of Article 38-154.2 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia. According to Manukyan's attorney, Hrant Ananyan, the judge had no right to examine that case. On July 9, the Criminal Court of Appeal overturned the decision of the Court of First instance regarding the arrest of Abraham Manukyan.

Date of arrest: June 17, 2020

Source: "Former MP Abraham Manukyan remanded into custody", [Armenpress.am](https://armenpress.am), 27.06.2020



THE MAYOR  
OF GORIS

## ARUSH ARUSHANYAN

On 16 July 2021, Arush Arushanyan, Mayor of Goris, was charged with Article 35-154.2, Part 4, Clause 2, Article 38-149, Part 2, Clause 4, Article 38-154.2, Part 3 of the Republic of Armenia Criminal Code (breach of voting secrecy, obstruction of exercising the right to vote). Arushanyan was handed a suspended six-month jail term and set free on 28 March 2022, nine months after being arrested on a series of charges denied by himself, described as "politically motivated".

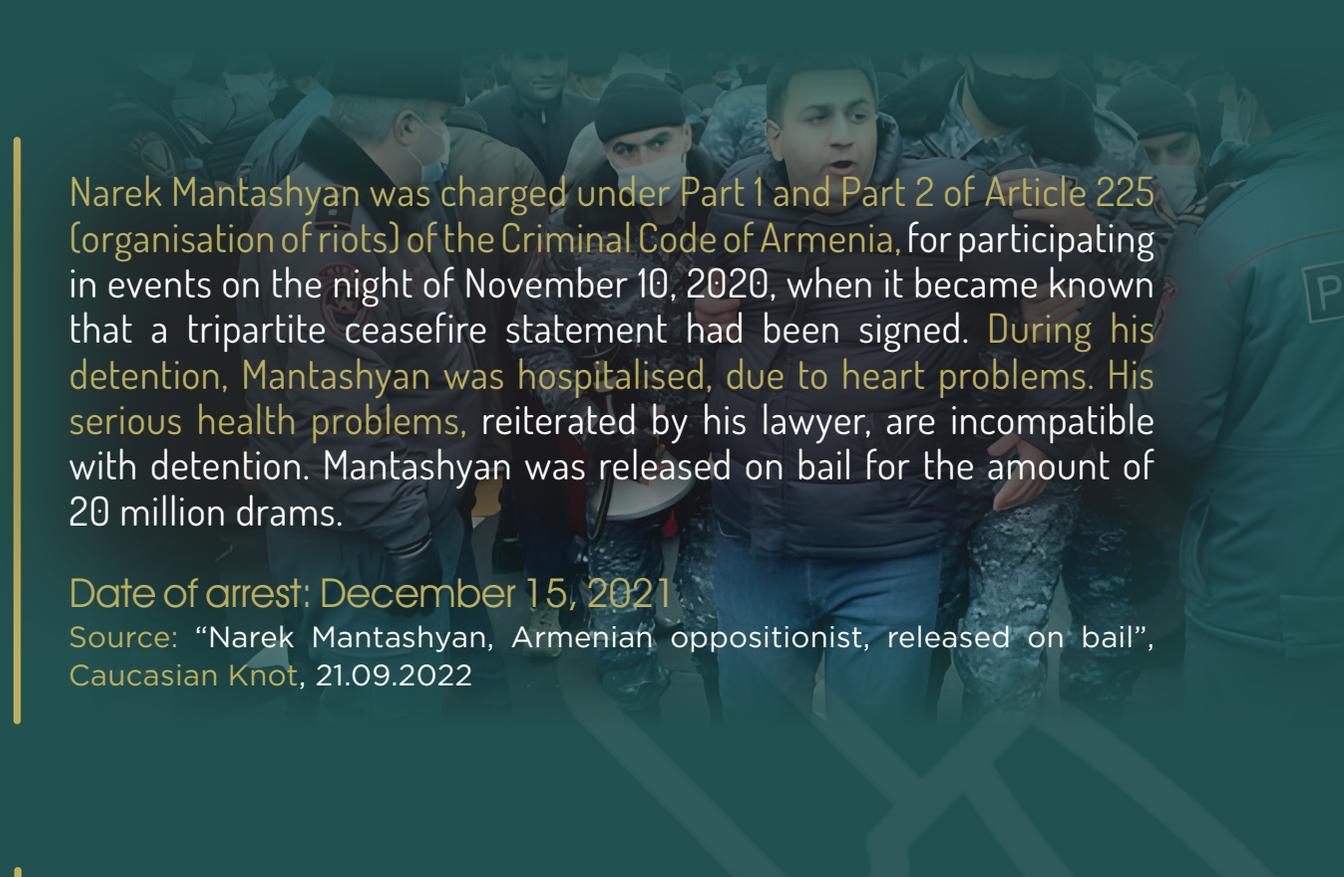
Date of arrest: July 16, 2021

Source: "Goris Mayor Arush Arushanyan back to public life after release", [Panorama.am](https://panorama.am), 31.03.2022



OPPOSITION  
HAYASTAN  
ALLIANCE  
MEMBER

**NAREK**  
MANTASHYAN



Narek Mantashyan was charged under Part 1 and Part 2 of Article 225 (organisation of riots) of the Criminal Code of Armenia, for participating in events on the night of November 10, 2020, when it became known that a tripartite ceasefire statement had been signed. During his detention, Mantashyan was hospitalised, due to heart problems. His serious health problems, reiterated by his lawyer, are incompatible with detention. Mantashyan was released on bail for the amount of 20 million drams.

Date of arrest: December 15, 2021

Source: “Narek Mantashyan, Armenian oppositionist, released on bail”, *Caucasian Knot*, 21.09.2022



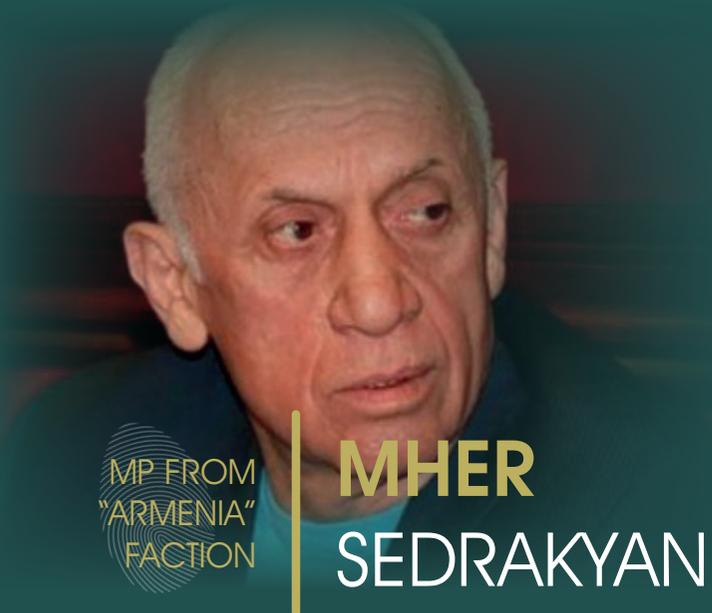
JUDGE OF THE  
COURT OF GENERAL  
JURISDICTION OF  
SYUNIK REGION

**BORIS**  
BAKHSHIYAN

Boris Bakhshiyanyan, Judge of the Court of General Jurisdiction of the Syunik region was accused of passing a sentence of unlawful arrest of the defendant in one of the cases he was considering, having grave consequences. The defence linked the case against Bakhshiyanyan with his decision to release on bail Ashot Minasyan, Commander of the Sisakan detachment, who was accused of attempting to assassinate Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and preparing to seize power. Boris Bakhshiyanyan was released from detention on May 7 after his sentence was not extended.

Date of arrest: February 7, 2022

Source: “Armenian Judge Freed After ‘Political’ Arrest”, *Azatutyun.am*, 09.05.2022



MP FROM  
"ARMENIA"  
FACTION

## MHER SEDRAKYAN

Former MP Mher Sedrakyan was arrested in Armenia. The deputy's property was impounded under the law "On confiscation of illegal property." Sedrakyan was charged with abuse of power.

Date of arrest: 5 September, 2022

Source: "Суд в Армении арестовал имущество экс-депутата Мгера Седракяна", [Sputnik Armenia](#), 08.08.2022



ACTIVIST OF  
THE ARF  
DASHNAKTSUTYUN  
PARTY

## GERASIM VARDANYAN

Gerasim Vardanyan, an activist in the ARF Dashnaksutyun party, remained under arrest for a further three months. The court rejected the motion to release him on bail, not accepting the personal guarantee of the deputies. He was accused of organising unrest in Yerevan, following the signing of the tripartite ceasefire on Karabakh on November 9-10, 2020.

Date of arrest: May 12, 2022

Source: "В Армении суд не согласился отпустить активиста под поручительство депутатов", [Sputnik Armenia](#), 02.08.2022



FILM PRODUCER  
AND PUBLIC  
FIGURE

## ARMEN GRIGORYAN

On July 15, 2022, Grigoryan died during his court hearing in Yerevan. Grigoryan had been accused of humiliating the national dignity of Armenian citizens. The prosecution lawyers claimed that Grigoryan was an active oppositionist who was demanding the resignation of the state authorities, so the case brought against him was clearly fictitious and exclusively political in nature. The opposition accused the authorities of indifference to the health of political prisoners, due to the deterioration of Grigoryan's health after his arrest.

Date of arrest: May 17, 2022

Source: "Armenian Film Producer Collapses And Dies In Court", Radio Free Europe, 16.07.2022



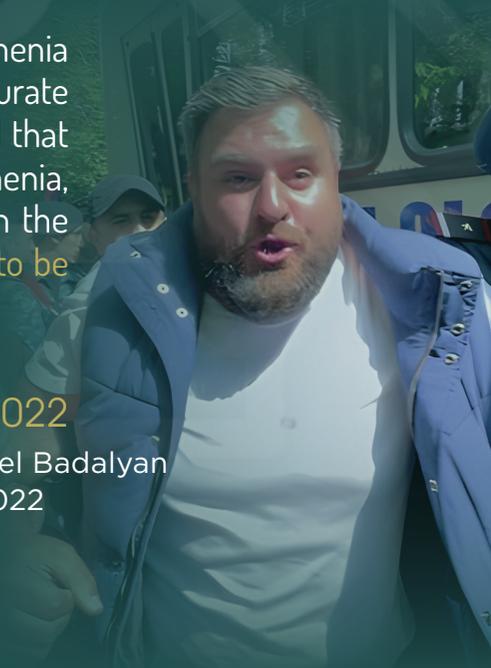
A LEADER OF THE  
"FREEDOM"  
MOVEMENT

## MIKAYEL BADALYAN

According to the report issued by the Republic of Armenia Investigative Committee, the blogger, having no accurate information, on April 11 posted on his Telegram channel that terrorist attacks were possible in the territory of Armenia, his objective being to create an emergency situation in the country. The decision to arrest Badalyan is considered to be politically motivated.

Date of arrest: May 24, 2022 and June 18, 2022

Source: "Lawyers: Prosecution of oppositionist Mikayel Badalyan 'totally' politically motivated", Panorama.am, 27.05.2022





FORMER DEPUTY  
CHIEF OF STAFF OF  
ARMENIA'S  
PARLIAMENT

**ARSEN**  
**BABAYAN**

On October 21, 2019, Arsen Babayan, Former Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armenian Parliament was found guilty and arrested for usurping power, in a lawsuit based on the testimony of MP Arman Babajanyan. On October 24, the Common Jurisdiction Court of Yerevan granted the prosecutor's petition to arrest Arsen Babayan for a period of two months. In December 2019, indictments against Arsen Babayan and Ara Babloyan were denied by the General Prosecutor's Office. The General Prosecutor's Office dismissed the case, citing insufficient evidence.

October 21, 2019

Source: "Arsen Babayan released from jail", [Armenpress.am](https://armenpress.am), 12.11.2019;  
"ՀԶԾ-ն Արսեն Բաբայանին կալանավորելու միջնորդություն է ներկայացրել, գործով կասկածյալ է ներգրավվել Արա Բաբոյանը", [Azatutyun](https://azatutyun.am), 23.10.2019;  
"Արսեն Բաբայանը կալանավորվեց", [Azatutyun](https://azatutyun.am), 24.10.2019;  
"Former Deputy Chief of Staff of Armenia's Parliament released from detention", [OC-media](https://oc-media.com), 14.11.2019



FORMER  
GOVERNOR OF  
THE SYUNIK  
PROVINCE

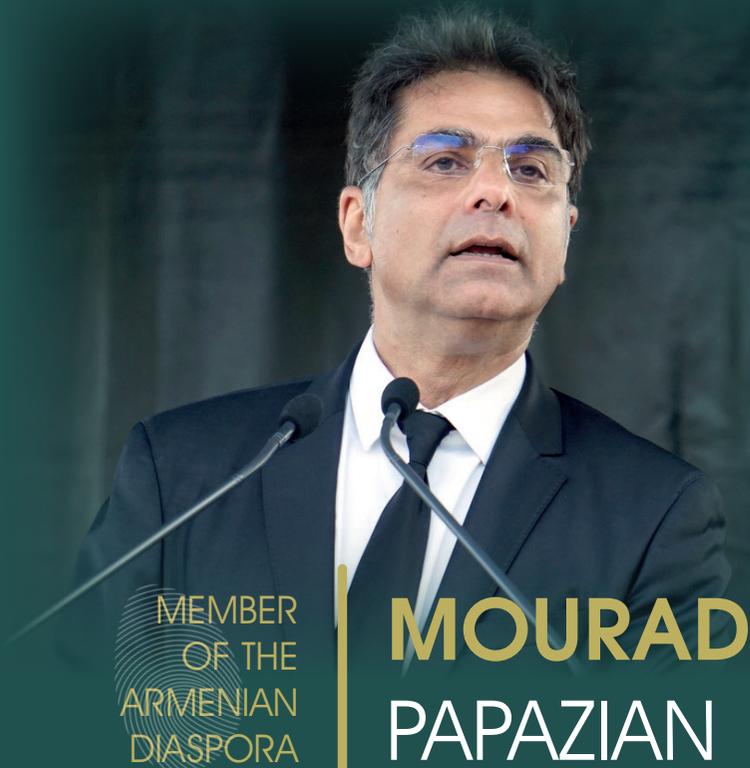
**SUREN**  
**KHACHATRYAN**

Suren Khachatryan has been wanted since November 19, 2019. The former governor of Syunik is charged with abuse of office, complicity in official fraud, and complicity in embezzlement or embezzlement. Detention was chosen as a preventive measure against him, and a search was announced. During the preliminary investigation, information was received that Suren Khachatryan was found in France, based on which the prosecutor's office filed a motion to extradite him. On October 28, 2022, Armenian General Prosecutor's Office reported that France refused to extradite the former governor of Syunik Suren (Surik) Khachatryan to Armenia.

November 19, 2019

Source: "Former Governor of Syunik Surik Khachatryan declared wanted", [Armenpress.am](https://armenpress.am), 20.11.2019;  
"Why France does not extradite Syunik Province ex-governor to Armenia?", [News.am](https://news.am), 05.12.2022

# DIASPORA ARMENIANS WHO WERE NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER ARMENIA



MEMBER  
OF THE  
ARMENIAN  
DIASPORA

**MOURAD**  
**PAPAZIAN**

On July 13, 2022, Mourad Papazian landed in Yerevan on an Air France plane to attend a quarterly meeting of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), of which he is a leader in France. As soon as he arrived in Armenia, the Co-president of the Coordinating Council of Armenian Organisations of France (CCAF) was arrested by the police and returned on an Air France plane to Paris on July 14 (the French national holiday). According to the Armenian government: “He was one of the persons who organised an attack against the convoy of a government delegation led by the Prime Minister near the Armenian Embassy in France on June 1, 2021.”

Papazian claims on his Facebook post he didn’t participate in the protest rally in Paris on June 1 and that he’s visited Armenia at least four times since then. “The Prime Minister’s office obviously can’t provide proof of their claim as I didn’t attend this rally. They are lying. I will take all legal actions to defend myself to have my right to return to Armenia restored,” Papazian writes.

July 13, 2022

Source: “Mourad Papazian, Co-president of Coordinating Council of Armenian Organizations of France (CCAF), Banned from Armenia”, [Mirrorspectator.com](https://www.mirrorspectator.com), 15.07.2022



MEMBER OF  
THE ARMENIAN  
DIASPORA

## MASIS ABRAMYAN

On August 1, 2022, the National Security Service banned Masis Abrahamyan, Chairman of the Hay Dat (Armenian Question) Committee of the ARF Dashnaksutyun Party in the Netherlands, together with his daughter Syune, from entering Armenia, with no explanation being provided by the border guards. The Abrahamyans believe they were not allowed to enter the country for political reasons, on direct orders of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. In May 2022, during an official visit by the Prime Minister of Armenia to the Netherlands, representatives of the Dashnaksutyun party organised a protest, during which participants shouted insults at Pashinyan.

August 1, 2022

Source: ““An attempt to silence us” - Why three diaspora Armenians were not allowed into Armenia”, [Jam-news.net](https://jam-news.net), 03.08.2022



MEMBER OF  
THE ARMENIAN  
DIASPORA

## SUNEH ABRAHAMIAN

On July 31, 2022, Suneh Abrahamian, who is affiliated with the Dashnaksutyun's youth wing, said in a video posted on Facebook, which was shared widely in Armenian circles, that she had been barred from entering Armenia. “They took my passport without any reason and denied my entry. I have no place in my homeland. Armenians have no place in their homeland,” she said.

July 31, 2022

Source: “More diasporans say they were denied entry to Armenia”, [Civilnet.am](https://civilnet.am), 01.08.2022

# FREEDOM OF SPEECH PRESSURE AND ATTACKS



HRAPARAK  
NEWSPAPER  
REPORTER

**ANUSH**  
**DASHTENTS**

The Hraparak newspaper reporter Anush Dashtents was attacked in the centre of Yerevan. The journalist noticed Hayk Sargsyan, National Assembly deputy, standing by the campaign headquarters of the ruling Civil Contract Party, so she approached him to ask a question. The MP snatched Dashtents’s phone and drove off, stating that he would not return the device until she “came to her senses”. Sargsyan soon returned the phone to her, via his associates. However, it had been unlocked and the video materials had been deleted. The Special Investigation Service refused to open a criminal case “due to the lack of evidence.”

June 3, 2021

Source: “ATTACKS ON MEDIA WORKERS IN 2021: ARMENIA, GEORGIA, MOLDOVA”, Justice for Journalists Foundation, 05.09.2022

As of April 2022, at least 802 cases related to Article 137 of the Criminal Code concerning ‘severe insults’ had been opened, 48 of which were criminal cases, with six people being found guilty. By the end of 2021, eight criminal cases were taken to court under this provision. All of the eight cases sent to the court concerned Facebook posts allegedly insulting Prime Minister Pashinyan. Examples of charges included:

- February 2022: Sona Aghekyan, Co-Founder of the Yerevan Alternative Municipality Initiative, was charged with insulting the Prime Minister in a Facebook post.
- February 2022: Karine Ayvazyan was charged for a Facebook post that allegedly criticised the Prime Minister, although Ayvazyan claimed that the post did not refer to Pashinyan.
- February 2022: Marina Danielyan was charged under Article 137 of the Criminal Code.
- February 2022: Narine Hayrapetyan was charged under Article 137 of the Criminal Code for a comment she left on Prime Minister Pashinyan’s Facebook page, which allegedly constituted a severe insult.
- February 2022: The Court of General Jurisdiction in Yerevan opened criminal cases against Mushegh Shushanyan under Articles 137 and 226 of the Criminal Code. Shushanyan called Pashinyan a “traitor” and called for his death in a Facebook post.
- February 2022: Manuel Manukyan was charged under Article 137 of the Criminal Code for insulting the Prime Minister on Facebook. The trial was postponed until April.

February - April, 2022

Source: “Freedom on the Net 2022 Country Report”, [Freedomhouse.org](https://www.freedomhouse.org)

Armenian police opened a criminal case against a Facebook user for insulting Nikol Pashinyan in a comment under a photo featuring the Prime Minister. Police stated that the alleged perpetrator violated Article 137.1 of Armenia's Criminal Code: a serious insult to a person due to his public activities. The case was initiated without a complaint from the presumably injured party.

September 23, 2021

Source: "Criminal case opened for 'insulting' Facebook comment on Pashinyan photo", [Oc-Media](#), 23.09.2021

Edgar Ghazaryan, who is highly critical of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's administration as well as the opposition, was assaulted by two unknown men near his home. Ghazaryan is known as the founder and leader of the "Independence Movement," which from late April–June 15, 2022, held mass protests in Yerevan, demanding the resignation of Pashinyan.

October 18, 2022

Source: "Government critic Edgar Ghazaryan attacked near his home", [Panorama.am](#), 18.10.2022

The second quarter of 2022 was marked by a dramatic increase in physical violence against members of the media. The Committee for the Protection of Freedom of Expression registered 11 new occurrences during coverage of the disobedience actions organised by opposition forces, one of which occurred in the Armenian Parliament.

2022

Source: "Ermənistanda jurnalistlərə qarşı fiziki zorakılıq hallarının sayı kəskin artıb – HESABAT", [Ordu.az](#), 28.07.2022



# DEATH AND ASSASSINATION



COORDINATOR OF  
THE HAYNEWS.AM  
NEWS WEBSITE

**MHER**  
EGHIAZARYAN

Mher Yeghiazaryan, director of the Haynews.am news website, died in a Nubarashen penitentiary institution after 44 days of hunger strike. Yeghiazaryan was also Vice-Chairman of the Hayots Artsivner (United Armenia) party.

January 26, 2019

Source: "Haynews.am news website responsible Mher Yeghiazaryan died in Nubarashen penitentiary", [Aysor.am](http://Aysor.am), 26.01.2019



POLITICAL  
CITIZEN

## GRANIK PETROSYAN

Garnik Petrosian, one of the protesters who crashed into the Parliament building in Yerevan during a riot on 10 November, demanding Nikol Pashinyan's resignation, was found dead under a bridge.

November 14, 2020

Source: "Участник беспорядков в Ереване бросился с моста через час после допроса - Генпрокуратура", [Sputnik Armenia](#), 18.11.2020



A PUBLIC AND  
POLITICAL  
FIGURE

## MIHRAN HAKOBYAN

Unknown individuals in Yerevan threw a hand grenade under the personal vehicle of Mihran Hakobyan, a public and political figure, formerly affiliated with the Republican Party of Armenia.

June 21, 2022

Source: "Hand grenade thrown under Armenian public figure Mihran Hakobyan's car", [Tert.am](#), 22.06.2021



FORMER  
POLICE CHIEF  
OF ARMENIA

# HAYK HARUTUNYAN

In September 2019, Hayk Harutyunyan, former Police Chief of Armenia and Robert Kocharyan's Interior Minister, was found dead in his house in Bijni, Kotayk Province. According to the preliminary version, he committed suicide. People who knew him well do not believe in the version of suicide. Hayk Harutyunyan was a key witness in the March 1 case. There is no doubt that Harutyunyan could play an important role in the final disclosure of the bloody crime. Harutyunyan's involvement in the March 1 case interfered with the main organizers of the state crime.

September, 2019

Source: "Person at Hayk Harutyunyan's apparent suicide scene questioned, authorities deny pressure allegation", [Armenpress.am](https://www.armenpress.am), 24.09.2019

# NATIONAL MINORITIES



HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
ACTIVIST

**SASHIK**  
**SULTANYAN**

Armenian authorities persisted with spurious criminal incitement charges against a human rights activist, Sashik Sultanyan. The charges were in retaliation for an online interview in which Sultanyan spoke about a variety of problems he believes the local Yezidi community faces in Armenia. On October 3, 2020, Armenia's National Security Service (NSS) initiated a criminal investigation against Sultanyan, stemming from an interview he gave to the website Yezidinews.am, published in June 2020. On May 20, 2021, the NSS confiscated three computers from Sultanyan, one of which belonged to a family member, two mobile phones and several USB sticks. Although the UN and several human rights organisations called on Armenia to stop the prosecution against Sashik Sultanyan, he currently remains under investigation.

October 3, 2020

Source: "Armenia: Malicious Prosecution of Activist",  
Hrw.org, 16.06.2021

# PRESSURE ON THE MEDIA AND JOURNALISTS

On March 18, in a cafe in Yerevan, Hakob Arshakyan, Minister of High-Tech Industry, used physical violence towards Paylak Fahradyan, Editor, “Irakanum.am”. The journalist, having noticed the high-ranking official, approached him and asked what he was doing in the cafe during working hours. According to media publications, the conversation became heated, and the minister hit the journalist several times, damaging his computer and phone. The Prosecutor’s Office referred the case to the Special Investigation Service to clarify the details of the incident. However, the Special Investigation Service closed the case due to a “lack of evidence.”

March 18, 2021

Source: “ATTACKS ON MEDIA WORKERS IN 2021: ARMENIA, GEORGIA, MOLDOVA”,  
Justice for Journalists Foundation, 05.09.2022

During a pre-election meeting between the electorate and Acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, a group of participants were aggressive towards “Yerevan Today” correspondent Suzi Badoyan. She was pushed, and attempts were made to snatch her microphone. On November 18, a criminal case pertaining to this event was closed due to a “lack of evidence of the suspect’s identities”.

June 14, 2021

Source: “ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS, BLOGGERS AND MEDIA WORKERS IN 2021”,  
Justice for Journalists Foundation

In October 2019, the Office of the “Hayeli” (Mirror) publication was attacked by a group of young people in Yerevan to protest against the headline of an article published by the news website. Attackers demanded an immediate stop of “Hayeli.am”, because of the fact that the news website’s editor, Anzhela Tovmasian, is the sister of Hrayr Tovmasian. The chairman of Armenia’s Constitutional Court faced growing government pressure to resign. In addition, the Investigative Committee said it had indicted four government supporters who reportedly attacked the offices of an online publication critical of the Armenian authorities.

October 5, 2019

Source: “Journalism organizations issue statement, condemn attack on Hayeli.am”,  
Aysor.am, 07.10.2019

On September 11, Tehmine Yenokyan, Journalist, “Iragir.am” made a post on her Facebook page that the employees of the “Lydian Armenia” company separated her telephone conversation from the live programme broadcast by her colleagues, published it and wrote insulting expressions against her. She also stated that for days, surveillance activities were undertaken close to her house, recording her movements in and out.

September 11, 2018

Source: 2018 third quarterly (July - September) report by the Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression (pg 24)

On September 17, 2018, Department 6 of the Republic of Armenian Police and employees of the Special Investigative Service conducted a search at the editorial office of the “Yerevan today” news site. They were looking for wiretapping equipment and computers were checked to establish how the site received and published the YouTube link of the wiretapped telephone conversation between Arthur Vanetsyan, NSS (National Security Service) Director and Sasoun Khachatryan, Head of SIS (Special Investigative Service of Armenia), two days before this was spread over the internet.

September 17, 2018

Source: “Law Enforcement Officers Seized Hard Disks From Yerevan.Today’s Computers”, Media.am, 18.09.2018

On January 28, four Armenian opposition leaders – the Founders of the Adekvad [Adequate] party Artur Danielyan and Konstantin Ter-Nakalyan, together with Grigor Minasyan and Azat Adamyan, were detained by police.

According to Armenian bloggers, the police aimed to gain access to the personal correspondence of the detainees on their smartphones and seized their mobile devices. In addition, all these actions were allegedly carried out on Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's personal order.

On the same day, the Armenian police detained another opposition blogger and founder of the VETO Movement, Narek Malyan, on suspicion of the illegal possession of weapons.

Narek Malyan is one of those who oppose the activities of the Soros Foundation in Armenia. He is considered to be one of the founders of the Adekvad [Adequate] party opposing the Armenian government.

January 28, 2020

Source: "Armenian public-political club issues statement on apprehension of activists", News.am, 28.01.2020

## HRAPARAK NEWSPAPER AND ANDRADARDZ PRESS CLUB NGO

On June 21, 2019, NA deputy Hayk Sargsyan filed a second lawsuit in the Yerevan Court of General Jurisdiction against Andradardz Press Club NGO, seeking compensation for the damage caused to his honor and dignity through defamation and insult. The cause of the lawsuit was an article, titled “Another precious gift: a cell-phone number that costs 20 million AMD for Hayk Sargsyan” and published on Newspress.am website. On June 28, the lawsuit was accepted for proceedings. Hayk Sargsyan filed three more lawsuits with the Yerevan Court of General Jurisdiction against Hraparak Daily LLC, seeking compensation for damage caused to honor, dignity, and good reputation through defamation and insult. The reason for the MP’s lawsuit against the founder of the Hraparak newspaper, he said, were the 22 publications against him in the newspaper and their dissemination via satellite websites. According to the website, “Hayk Sargsyan is the most odious MP in the parliament”, and there are suspicions that he played a role in a scandalous criminal case. According to another article published on the website, Hayk Sargsyan “made a row” on the Yerevan–Moscow plane. In all 3 lawsuits, the MP demands that the defendant make a public apology and publish the court judgment in the same newspaper and on the website, as well as to pay a compensation. On October 9, all three cases were accepted into proceedings.

June 21, 2019

Source: “ՀԱՅԿ ՍԱՐԳՍՅԱՆԻ ԿՐՔՈՏ ՊԱՐԸ՝ ԳԵՂԵՑԿՈՒՅԻՆԵՐԻ ՀԵՏ (ՏԵՍԱՆՅՈՒԹ)”, [Hraparak.am](http://Hraparak.am), 07.08.2019;

“«ՀՐԱՊԱՐԱԿ»-Ի խՈՐՀՐԴԱՐԱՆՈՒՄ «ՆՅՈՒ ՇՄԱՅՍ» Է ՀԱՅՏՆԿԵԼ”, [Hraparak.am](http://Hraparak.am), 25.05.2019;

“ՊԱՏԳԱՄԱԿՈՐ ՀԱՅԿ ՍԱՐԳՍՅԱՆԸ «ԴԵԲՈՇ» Է ՍԱՐՔԵԼ ԵՐԵՎԱՆ-ՄՈՍԿՎԱ ԻՆՔՆԱԹԻՈՒՄ”, [Hraparak.am](http://Hraparak.am), 26.05.2019

MG

Monitoring Group of Human  
Rights Organizations

# ARMEDIA DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

