

## **Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Armenian National Platform NGO Board**

### **Statement**

We the members of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Armenian National Platform NGO Board (Board) believe that the requests articulated in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> points of the petition concerning the ANP Coordinator's alleged misconduct, which was submitted to the ANP Assembly held on 25 May of this year by 14 organizations, are beyond the scope of competence of both the ANP Assembly and the ANP Delegates' Meeting and therefore cannot be discussed by either of them.

As per the Eastern Partnership SCF ANP Secretariat NGO Statute section 2.1 stipulates that the Organization's objective is contributing to the implementation of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum projects and the Organization's aim is to provide organizational and technical assistance to the ANP. Nevertheless, it is a separate, autonomous, and self-governing body entity which in accordance with its Statute clause 1.16 is created and conducts its activities based on the principles of equal rights of its members, self-governance, and collegiality in management.

So, neither the ANP Congress nor the Meeting of Delegates had or could have had any direct involvement in the selection of the Secretariat's executive director or the process of the latter's hiring, for the reason that the Secretariat is a separate NGO which in accordance with the Law on Civil Society Organizations was empowered by the ANP Congress to adopt a Statute of its own and in accordance with the latter to set up its own administrative bodies which in turn, acting within the scope of their authority, hired the Secretariat executive director through a competitive selection process. As per the same regulations of the Statute, it is the administrative bodies of the Secretariat which are authorized to discuss and make decisions on matters regarding the Secretariat Executive Director's performance.

For a considerable period of time, the Secretariat Board has taken note of concerns raised by the ANP Coordinator regarding the Secretariat Executive Director's job performance, to which he referred within the scope of his remit since the month of April. In particular, on 29 April of this year, the Secretariat Board was informed of the ANP Coordinator's concerns regarding the Secretariat Executive Director's job performance and made a decision to launch a probe into the alleged misconduct by the Secretariat Executive Director. The Secretariat Board in its session held on 10 May and continued on 17 May after five-hour-long deliberations chose not to pronounce a reprimand to the Secretariat Executive Director. In the meantime, it is necessary to highlight that when making that decision the Secretariat Board made it clear that they consider the Executive Director's explanations unsatisfactory however abstained from officially pronouncing a reprimand and thus giving her a chance to return to a more diligent performance of her duties. It would not be unnecessary to add that before the earlier different members of the Board had informal meetings with the Secretariat Executive Director urging her to normalize working relations with the ANP coordinator. It is to be regretted that our appeals have not been heeded and the Secretariat Executive Director instead of carrying out her main job duties chose the path of capitalizing on the controversy between the ANP Coordinator and the signatories of the petition, which is precisely the non-constructive way.

We call on the ANP Congress and the ANP Delegates Meeting to reject considering those issues regarding the Executive Director, since on top of the above-mentioned arguments, any decision made by the ANP will have no legal force as it would not comply with the Republic of Armenia Law on Civil Society Organizations clause 2 section 3, clause 3 sections 1 and 2, clause 4 section 1 point 6, clause

19 sections 1 and 2, as well as the points 2.16.1 and 3.16.2 of the ANP Statute. According to that later the “ANP Secretariat in conformity with its Statute provisions provides relevant organizational and technical assistance to the ANP in support of the implementation of the Eastern Partnership programs”.

ANP Secretariat NGO Chairman of the Board and ANP Coordinator Hovsep Khurshudyan, with our permission, has already circulated among the ANP members for their knowledge materials on the board session of the ANP Secretariat NGO, voice recordings of the session as well as several working e-mails. This statement is also attached to the minutes of the board session of the Eastern Partnership CSF ANP Secretariat NGO, held on 10 May.

Members of the EaP CSF ANP Secretariat NGO Board:

*Grigor Yeritsyan, Armenian Progressive Youth NGO*

*Lusine Hakobyan, Europe in Law Association*

*Elen Manaseryan, Confederation of Armenian trade unions*

*Ashkhen Musheghyan, Union of Informed Citizens NGO*

*Karen Chilingaryan, "Consumers' Consulting Center" NGO*

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