



Making Child Rights a Reality for the Most Vulnerable Children

Regional parliamentary seminar hosted by the National Assembly of Armenia and organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Yerevan, Armenia, 14-16 June 2011

Information Note

A. General information about the seminar

Dates

The seminar will take place from 14 to 16 June 2011. Please refer to the seminar agenda to identify the best arrival and departure times.

Venue

The seminar will take place on the first day (14 June) at the Armenian National Assembly (19 Bagramyan Street). Buses have been arranged for participants and will be leaving for the National Assembly from hotels at 10:45 a.m. On the second and third days (15-16 June), the Seminar, excluding the field visits, will take place at the Marriott Hotel in Yerevan.

Objectives of the seminar

The seminar will aim to facilitate debate on ways and mechanisms addressing the needs of the most vulnerable children, reaching out to them, supporting their well-being and development, and ensuring respect for their rights.

The seminar will focus on investing in a good start to life for marginalized children and protecting them from violence. It will address all functions of a parliament and examine how these can serve to protect children and ensure respect for their rights. Experience from various countries will be presented, and specific case studies addressed. Particular attention would be placed on reaching out to the most marginalised children and ensuring respect for children and their rights with equity.

Participation

The seminar is open to members of parliament and parliamentary staff from national parliaments of the CEE-CIS region. Ideally, the membership of each delegation should represent the various political trends in the parliament concerned and include members of parliament who work actively on child rights issues. In line with the IPU's stated objective to promote partnership between men and women in political life, participating parliaments should also aim at including an equal number of men and women delegates. Delegations should also have parliamentary staff members from the competent parliamentary committee or committees.



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ARMENIA



Organisation of proceedings

In accordance with the IPU's practice, all participants will have equal speaking rights.

So that the discussions can be as fruitful and enriching as possible, there will be no list of speakers on any agenda item. After an agenda item has been introduced by the resource persons, the floor will be open to participants for questions and comments. Participants will be invited to avoid prepared statements and engage in debates.

A General Rapporteur will be called upon on the last day to sum up the work of the Seminar at its concluding session.

The debates will take place in Armenian, English and Russian.

Field visits

Field visits will be organised for participants on 16 June in the morning. Additional information will be provided prior to the seminar.

Registration and Information Desk

A Registration and Information Desk will be available to participants at the seminar venue from 14 to 16 June.

Participants are kindly requested to register with this service as soon as possible after their arrival. It will issue identity badges, deal with enquiries concerning the Seminar and handle messages and mail.

Visas

Citizens of CIS countries do not need a visa. Holders of diplomatic and service passports from the following countries do not need a visa either: Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, and Romania. Citizens of all other countries require visas, which can be obtained from an Armenian Consulate in the country of residence where there is diplomatic representation. For others, visas can be obtained upon arrival at Yerevan airport. The names of all registered participants will be provided to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for visa facilitation. There will be no visa charges for Seminar participants. Certain nationalities listed in the link below cannot obtain visas upon arrival and therefore should apply at the nearest Armenian consulate in advance <http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/>.

Accommodation

A block reservation of single rooms has been made for all participants at the following hotels from 13 June to 17 June. All three other hotels are within 5 to 10 minutes walking distance from the Marriott hotel, venue of the Seminar.

The daily rates for single standard room including buffet breakfast are as follows:

Hotel Name	Hotel rate in US\$
Armenia Marriott Hotel Yerevan (5 star)	197
Golden Tulip Yerevan (5 star)	120
Best Western Congress Hotel (double rooms at single rate) (4 star)	110
Best Western Congress Hotel (single rooms) (4 star)	95
Ani Plaza Hotel (4 star)	105

Participants are kindly requested to fill the enclosed hotel reservation form including credit card details and send it no later than **20 May (for Golden Tulip and Congress hotels) and 29 May 2011 (for Marriott and Ani**

Plaza hotels) to Marina Ter-Sargsyan at mtersargsyan@unicef.org and IPU at postbox@mail.ipu.org with copy to Yeghishe Tanashyan, Five Star Travel (at info@fivestars.am).

Hotel rooms will be provided on a first come first serve basis, given the number of rooms made available by each hotel for the Seminar. Where rooms are no longer available in the requested hotel an alternative hotel will be proposed from the other three hotels.

Given the strict cancellation policy of the hotels, after **29th May**, hotels reserve the right to charge the penalty fee:

For cancelations from 30 May - 04 June, 2011 1 (one) night cancellation fee per room will apply. For cancelations after 04 June, 2011 2 (two) nights cancellation fee per room will apply.

Lunch and dinner will be provided for meeting participants on 14 and 15 June as part of the Seminar.



H1 - Ani hotel, <http://www.anihotel.com/>

H7 - Marriot-Armenia hotel, <http://www.marriottarmenia.com/>

H13 - Golden Tulip Yerevan, <http://www.goldentulipyerevan.com/Default.aspx>

H17 - Congress Hotel, <http://www.congresshotelyerevan.com/>

Link to Yerevan Map: http://www.yerevan.am/edfiles/files/map/map_yerevan.pdf

Arrival and Departure

In order to ensure an efficient reception service, all participants are kindly requested to provide sufficient arrival and departure information, including dates, flight numbers and arrival and departure times on the hotel reservation form.

A reception service will be provided for participants at Yerevan International Airport from 13 June onwards.

The reception service will assist with arrival and formalities and transfers to the hotels. This service will also operate at the end of the seminar to assist participants with transfers from their hotels to the airport.

Other Services

The following services will be available to participants in the Seminar venue:

- International telephone and fax (participants will pay for their calls when they are made)
- Restaurant, cafeteria and bar

B. General information about Armenia

Armenia (**Hayastan** in the Armenian language) is located in the southern Caucasus, bordered by Georgia from the north, Azerbaijan from the east, Iran from the south and Turkey from the west. Contemporary Armenia has a territory of 29 800 square km, lying between 1000 and 2500 meters above sea level. The population of Armenia is around 3.2 million with Yerevan, the capital and largest city, with a population of over 1 million.

Ethnic groups in Armenia include Armenians (98%), Kurds, Russians, Yezidis, and others. More than 90% of the population is nominally affiliated with the Armenian Apostolic Church, which is considered to be the national church of Armenia.

Armenia regained independence from the Soviet Union on 21 September 1991. Head of the Armenian state is President who is elected by popular vote for a five-year term (President of Armenia is Serzh Sargsyan). The Government is composed of a coalition of 3 parties. Armenia has a unicameral National Assembly (parliament) elected every five years, with a total of 131 members representing 5 parties.

Foreign Exchange

The exchange rate is US\$1.00 = AMD 373.66. Exchange counters are located at the airport, at the hotel and throughout the city. Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) are also available for easy cash withdrawal in **Armenian drams only**. Credit Cards are accepted for payment but do avoid personal checks and travelers checks as they may be difficult to cash or high charges may be applied.

There are banknotes of 1000, 5000, 20000, 50000 Dram (AMD) denomination. There are also coins of 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 Dram denomination.

Language

The official language is Armenian, a separate branch of the Indo-European family. The written characters are very unique and are not similar to any other alphabet. However, most of the shops and official buildings are also marked with Latin-letter signboards. Besides Armenian, nearly everyone speaks Russian, and many can communicate in English as well.

Telephone/GSM Operators

If you plan to make numerous calls and/or need to be reached at all times, one alternative is to carry your GSM mobile phone. You can easily obtain cellular prepaid cards. At present there are three GSM operators: Beeline (<http://www.beeline.am>), VivaCell (<http://www.vivacell.am>) and Orange (<https://www.orange.am>). There are also distance call cards which are available in most of the stores.

The country code is **374**.

Time

Armenian time corresponds to GMT+4 hours.

Eating out

Yerevan has a great number of restaurants and cafes which offer both Armenian and international cuisine.

The full list of restaurants, cafes and more details can be found at:

http://www.armeniapedia.org/index.php?title=Yerevan_Restaurant_Guide

Transportation

Visitors are recommended to use taxi services during their stay in Yerevan if required, many of which accept orders by phone. The fares usually start from AMD 600 and vary from 70 to 100 AMD per km. It is best to ensure that taxis are labeled with numbers on the sides and use taxi meters.

Weather

During June the climate is mild, slightly warm during the day but may be cool in the evening. It is recommended to bring along a light jacket. <http://www.meteo-tv.am>

Electricity

The electricity in Armenia is 220 volt, 50 Hz. Electric outlets in Armenia use European plugs with 2 round pins. The outlet plug adaptors can be purchased at any electronic shop in Yerevan.

Medical Assistance

For medical assistance the UN Medical Doctor at “Nairi” Medical Center can be contacted. Contact person: Ruzanna Melkonyan; cell. 094-48-22-89, office:

010 58 00 99, address: 21 Paronyan str., Yerevan.

“Nairi” Medical center provides both Emergency and Outpatient Clinic as well as Diagnostics services. It also provides all necessary bills and documents to be submitted to the health insurance companies.

The full list of services and facilities can be seen at <http://www.nairimed.com/>

Armenian Emergency Numbers

Police (free number): 102

Ambulance (free number): 103

Fire Department: 101

Hospital (UN Medical Doctor, Armamed): (010) 58 00 99

Contact Numbers

UNICEF Armenia Office

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UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)

Security Advisor, Plamen Skrobanski

Tel: (374 10) 543 822; (374 10) 566 073 (24 hours)

Mob. (374 91) 222461; (374 94) 222461

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