

Forslag til Rådets afgørelse om den holdning, som De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater skal indtage i samarbejdsrådet, der er oprettet ved partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen om oprettelse af et partnerskab mellem De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater på den ene side og Armenien på den anden side, til vedtagelsen af en henstilling om gennemførelse af handlingsplanen EU-Armenien /* KOM/2006/0627 endelig udg. */

[pic] | KOMMISSIONEN FOR DE EUROPÆISKE FÆLLESSKABER |

Bruxelles, den 25.10.2006

KOM(2006) 627 endelig

Forslag til

RÅDETS AFGØRELSE

om den holdning, som De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater skal indtage i samarbejdsrådet, der er oprettet ved partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen om oprettelse af et partnerskab mellem De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater på den ene side og Armenien på den anden side, til vedtagelsen af en henstilling om gennemførelse af handlingsplanen EU-Armenien

(forelagt af Kommissionen)

BEGRUNDELSE

Det Europæiske Råd erkendte på sit møde i København i 2002 ved afslutningen af tiltrædelsesforhandlingerne med ti nye stater, at udvidelsen udgjorde en ideel lejlighed til at udvikle forbindelserne med nabolandene på basis af fælles værdier, og anførte, at det fortsat var fast besluttet på at undgå nye skillelinjer i Europa og på at fremme stabilitet og velstand inden for og uden for EU's nye grænser.

Kommissionen foreslår i sin meddelelse "Det bredere europæiske naboskab: en ny ramme for forbindelserne med vores naboer i øst og syd" af marts 2003[1] at opstille handlingsplaner med partnerlandene. Den 16. juni 2003 hilste Rådet denne meddelelse velkommen og opfordrede Kommissionen til - eventuelt med bidrag fra den høje repræsentant - at fremlægge forslag til handlingsplaner for alle de berørte lande, begyndende med Ukraine, Moldova og partnerlandene i det sydlige Middelhavsområde, som har associeringsaftaler med EU.

Den 14. juni 2004 noterede Rådet sig med tilfredshed Kommissionens meddelelse med titlen "EU's naboskabspolitik - Strategidokument"[2]. Rådet hilste også Kommissionens forslag om at føre den europæiske naboskabspolitik på basis af handlingsplaner, som aftales med de berørte nabolande, velkommen og opfordrede Kommissionen til at fremlægge forslag til sådanne handlingsplaner. Rådet udstak desuden reglerne for, hvordan handlingsplanerne skulle gennemføres og overvåges.

Kommissionens meddelelse af december 2004[3] indeholdt den første række handlingsplaner til Rådet med henblik på godkendelse, og Kommissionens meddelelse af marts 2005[4] omfattede landerapporter for Armenien, Aserbajdsjan, Egypten, Georgien og Libanon, hvori det anbefales at indlede forhandlinger med disse lande om handlingsplaner. Den 16. og 17. juni 2005 hilste Rådet beslutningen om at udarbejde handlingsplaner med ovennævnte lande velkommen.

Kommissionen har i nært samarbejde med formandskabet og den høje repræsentant om anliggender i tilknytning til det politiske samarbejde og FUSP holdt sonderende drøftelser med Armenien, som mandede ud i en aftale om et udkast til handlingsplan. Handlingsplanen skal løbe i fem år. Den vil hjælpe til at implementere bestemmelserne i partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen og bidrage til endnu tættere forbindelser med Armenien, som indebærer et betydeligt mål af økonomisk integration og en udvidelse af det politiske samarbejde. Handlingsplanen vil i væsentlig grad hjælpe til at fremme tilnærmelsen af Armeniens lovgivning og standarder til Den Europæiske Unions.

Handlingsplanen er et bredt anlagt redskab til økonomisk og politisk samarbejde, som bringer forpligtelserne og målene i partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen op på et højere niveau.

Under henvisning til Rådets konklusioner af 14. juni 2004, hvori det hedder, at handlingsplanerne skal godkendes af Rådet og siden af de respektive associerings- eller samarbejdsråd, fremlægger Kommissionen hermed som bilag et forslag til en rådsafgørelse om den holdning, som De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater skal indtage i Samarbejdsrådet EU-Armenien til vedtagelsen af en henstilling om gennemførelse af bilagte handlingsplan.

Kommissionen anmoder derfor Rådet om at vedtage vedlagte forslag til rådsafgørelse.

Forslag til

RÅDETS AFGØRELSE

om den holdning, som De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater skal indtage i samarbejdsrådet, der er oprettet ved partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen om oprettelse af et partnerskab mellem De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater på den ene side og Armenien på den anden side, til vedtagelsen af en henstilling om gennemførelse af handlingsplanen EU-Armenien

RÅDET FOR DEN EUROPÆISKE UNION HAR -

under henvisning til artikel 2, stk. 1, i Rådets og Kommissionens afgørelse 1999/602/EC, ECSC, Euratom af 31.5.1999[5] om indgåelse af en partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftale mellem De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater på den ene side og Armenien på den anden side,

under henvisning til traktaten om Den Europæiske Union, særlig artikel 15,

under henvisning til forslag fra Kommissionen[6], og

ud fra følgende betragtninger:

(1) Partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen om oprettelse af et partnerskab mellem De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater på den ene side og Armenien på den anden side blev undertegnet den 22. april 1996 og trådte i kraft den 1. juli 1999.

(2) Parterne agter at enes om en handlingsplan EU-Armenien, som skal underbygge gennemførelsen af partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen med konkrete tiltag til virkeliggørelse af dens mål -

TRUFFET FØLGENDE AFGØRELSE:

Eneste artikel

Den holdning, som De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater skal indtage i samarbejdsrådet, der er oprettet ved partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen om oprettelse af et partnerskab mellem De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater på den ene side og Armenien på den anden side, til vedtagelsen af en henstilling om gennemførelse af handlingsplanen EU-Armenien, baseres på udkastet til henstilling fra samarbejdsrådet, der er knyttet som bilag til denne afgørelse.

Udfærdiget i Bruxelles, den

På Rådets vegne

Formand

BILAG

Udkast til

HENSTILLING

om gennemførelse af handlingsplanen EU-Armenien

SAMARBEJDSRÅDET EU-ARMENIEN HAR -

under henvisning til partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen om oprettelse af en associering mellem De Europæiske Fællesskaber og deres medlemsstater på den ene side og Armenien på den anden side – herefter benævnt partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen - særlig artikel 78, og

ud fra følgende betragtninger:

1. Artikel 78 i partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen giver samarbejdsrådet beføjelser til at afgive passende henstillinger med henblik på at virkeliggøre aftalens mål.

2. Efter artikel 95 i partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen træffer parterne alle fornødne almindelige eller særlige foranstaltninger for at opfylde deres forpligtelser i henhold til aftalen, og de drager omsorg for, at aftalens mål virkeliggøres.

3. Parterne i partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen er blevet enige om teksten til handlingsplanen EU-Armenien.

4. Handlingsplanen EU-Armenien skal underbygge gennemførelsen af partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen med konkrete tiltag, som kan tjene som praktisk vejledning for gennemførelsen.

5. Handlingsplanen har to formål, nemlig at udstikke konkrete tiltag til opfyldelse af parternes forpligtelser i henhold til partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen og de bredere rammer for en yderligere styrkelse af forbindelserne mellem EU og Armenien med et betydeligt mål af økonomisk integration og et udvidet politisk samarbejde i overensstemmelse med de generelle mål for partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen -

VEDTAGET FØLGENDE HENSTILLING:

Eneste artikel

Samarbejdsrådet henstiller, at parterne gennemfører bilagte handlingsplan EU-Armenien, i det omfang dette bidrager til at virkeliggøre målene for partnerskabs- og samarbejdsaftalen.

Udfærdiget i [...]

På samarbejdsrådets vegne

Formand

ANNEX EU/ARMENIA ENP ACTION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

The enlargement of the European Union on 1 May 2004 has brought a historical shift for the Union in political, geographic and economic terms, further reinforcing the political and economic interdependence between the EU and Armenia. It offers the opportunity for the EU and Armenia to develop an increasingly close relationship, going beyond co-operation, to involve a significant measure of economic integration and a deepening of political co-operation. The European Union and Armenia are determined to make use of this occasion to enhance their relations and to promote stability, security and welfare. The approach is founded on partnership, joint ownership and differentiation.

The European Neighbourhood Policy of the European Union sets ambitious objectives based on commitments to shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms.

Armenia is invited to enter into intensified political, security, economic and cultural relations with the EU, enhanced regional and cross border co-operation and shared responsibility in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The level of ambition of the relationship will depend on the degree of Armenia's commitment to common values as well as its capacity to implement jointly agreed priorities, in compliance with international and European norms and principles. The pace of progress of the relationship will acknowledge fully Armenia's efforts and concrete achievements in meeting those commitments.

This Action Plan is a first step in this process. The EU Armenia Action Plan is a political document laying out the strategic objectives of the cooperation between Armenia and the EU.

It covers a timeframe of five years. Its implementation will help fulfil the provisions in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), build ties in new areas, and will encourage and support Armenia's objective of further integration into European economic and social structures.

Implementation of the Action Plan will significantly advance the approximation of Armenia's legislation, norms and standards to those of the European Union. In this context, it will build solid foundations for further economic integration based on the adoption and implementation of economic and trade-related rules and regulations with the potential to enhance trade, investment and growth. It will furthermore help to devise and implement policies and measures to promote economic growth and social cohesion, to reduce poverty and to protect the environment, thereby contributing to the long-term objective of sustainable development.

Armenia and the EU will cooperate closely in implementing this Action Plan.

The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus will assist the relevant bodies in the implementation of this Action Plan in accordance with his mandate.

The EU takes note of Armenia's expressed European aspirations and will support the Government of Armenia in continuing to raise public awareness about the EU including through establishing a European Information Centre in Yerevan and assistance in drafting a Government Communication Strategy on European Integration.

2. NEW PARTNERSHIP PERSPECTIVES

The European Neighbourhood Policy opens new partnership perspectives:

- The perspective of moving beyond cooperation to a significant degree of integration, including through a stake in the EU's Internal Market, and the possibility for Armenia to participate progressively in key aspects of EU policies and programmes;
- An upgrade in the scope and intensity of political cooperation, through further development of mechanisms for political dialogue;
- Continuing strong EU commitment to support the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, drawing on the instruments at the EU's disposal, and in close consultation with the OSCE. The EU is ready to consider ways to strengthen further its engagement in conflict resolution and post conflict rehabilitation;
- Deepening trade and economic relations; providing the opportunity for convergence of economic legislation, the opening of economies to each other and the continued reduction of non-tariff barriers to trade, which will stimulate investment, exports and growth;
- Increased financial support: EU financial assistance for Armenia will be available to support the actions identified in the present document. The Commission is furthermore proposing a new European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) for this purpose, which will cover the main part of EU financial assistance and will include aspects of cross-border and trans-national cooperation. The Commission will also propose an extension of the EIB mandate to Armenia as of 2007;
- Possibilities of gradual opening of or reinforced participation in certain Community programmes, promoting economic, cultural, educational, environmental, technical and scientific links;
- Support including technical assistance and twinning to meet EU norms and standards, and targeted advice and support for legislative approximation through a mechanism such as TAIEX;
- Establish a dialogue, in accordance with the *acquis*, on matters related to the movement of people, including on readmission and visa, between the EU and Armenia;

In light of the fulfilment of the objectives of this Action Plan and of the overall evolution of EU – Armenia relations, consideration will be given in due time to the possibility of a new enhanced contractual relationship.

3. PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The Action Plan sets out a comprehensive set of priorities in areas within and beyond the scope of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. Among these priorities, all of which are important, particular attention should be given to the following areas and specific actions:

Priority area 1:

Strengthening of democratic structures, of the rule of law, including reform of the judiciary and combat of fraud and corruption;

Specific actions:

- Ensure proper implementation of the Constitutional Reform providing better separation of powers, independence of the judiciary and functioning of local self-government;
- Develop the Human Rights Ombudsman institution in accordance with the "Paris Principles" based on UN General Assembly Resolution 48/134 of December 1993;
- Ensure that the electoral framework is in full compliance with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections, by amending the Electoral Code and improving

electoral administration in line with OSCE/ODIHR and CoE Venice Commission recommendations (during 2006) ;

- Following the reform of the Constitution (concerning separation of powers, independence of the judiciary), develop/ adapt laws for the status of judges, the judiciary and the Council of Justice accordingly (during 2006)
- Following the reform of the Constitution (concerning separation of powers, independence of the judiciary) develop/adapt laws for the Procuracy in order to enhance procedures aimed at independence, impartiality, appointment and promotion of prosecutors, as well as the scope of their powers;
- Ensure that the status of the Council of Justice is independent from the legislative and the executive branches and that the Council can guarantee the independence of the judiciary and is the only and final instance with regard to issues related to the activities of judges and magistrates (during 2006);
- Improve the legal and particularly free legal aid system by improving and , strengthening the system of advocates and develop a school of professional practice for young graduates in law;
- Establish administrative courts;
- Review progress made in the implementation of the national Anti-Corruption Strategy through the implementation of the corresponding Action Plan and ensure active participation of civil society and business representatives in monitoring implementation (during 2006);
- Evaluate the process of introduction and formation of the civil service system and ensure continuous improvement of the civil service system in accordance with European norms and standards (during 2006).

Priority area 2:

Strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in compliance with international commitments of Armenia (PCA, CoE, OSCE, UN);

Specific actions:

- Ensure the independence of media by strengthening the independent regulatory body for public and private broadcasters, being responsible for awarding broadcasting licenses and supervision;
- Install freedom of assembly in line with international commitments and recommendations of the Council of Europe and OSCE by further improving the law on rallies and demonstrations;
- Ensure protection of the right to individual property
- Further reform of the penitentiary system in line with the recommendations of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) in order to improve detention conditions;
- Closely cooperate with OSCE and CoE to reform the police, in order to eliminate torture, other mistreatments and corruption and to set up more trust between police and society;
- Co-operate with European institutions in order to ensure fulfilment of Armenia's obligations under the revised European Social Charter;
- Take steps to accede to the European Code of Social Security, its Protocol and its revised version;

Priority area 3:

Encourage further economic development, enhance poverty reduction efforts and social cohesion, thereby contributing to the long term objective of sustainable development, including the protection of the environment;

Specific actions:

- Maintain macro-economic stability by implementing prudent monetary and fiscal policies in co-operation with IFIs;
- further reduce tax arrears;
- Continue implementation of the existing Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP) as the guiding policy framework for medium term pro-poor economic growth and equitable distribution of wealth according to the needs of the country;

- Further improve agriculture, rural infrastructure, water resources, social protection and education as a measure to further combat poverty ;
- Continue reform efforts in the fields of labour, social security and social protection;
- Strengthen the administrative capacity of the Public Employment Services (PES), Labour Inspectorate and social services agencies, in particular at regional level.
- Further implement projects in the field of protection of children's rights
- Continue reforms of the health sector ;
- Make further reform efforts in the fields of education, vocational training as well as continuous/adult education (to promote human resources development as one of the main pillars of the Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy);
- Improve statistical data to ensure better monitoring of PRSP, through improved administrative registers at local level;
- Strengthen administrative structures and procedures to ensure strategic planning of environment issues and coordination between relevant actors;

Priority area 4:

Further improvement of investment climate and strengthening of private sector-led growth

Specific actions:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive programme to improve the business climate, in particular by improving the conditions to starting a business, hiring and firing workers, registering property, getting credit, protecting investors, enforcing contracts and closing a business;
- Continue the modernisation and simplification of the tax administration in order to simplify the tax system, to improve coherence and reliability of the system and to reduce corruption risks and shadow economy. Define the necessary administrative structures and procedures, including a fiscal control strategy, audit and investigation methods, co-operation with the tax payers in order to increase tax compliance and effectiveness of tax collection. Identify all needs in terms of financial, human, logistic and IT resources;
- Continue efforts to develop the network of bilateral agreements between Armenia and EU Member States on avoidance of double taxation , including the improvement of transparency and the exchange of information in accordance with international standards;
- Strengthen the overall administrative capacity of the customs administration, in particular , to increase transparency of customs rules, procedures and tariffs, to ensure the correct implementation of customs valuation rules, to implement the principles of risk based customs control and post clearance control; provide the customs administration with sufficient internal or external laboratory expertise as well as sufficient operational capacity in the IT area;
- Implement a Customs Ethics Policy;
- Set up a mechanism to ensure regular consultation/information of the trade community on import and export regulations and procedures;

Priority area 5:

Further convergence of economic legislation and administrative practices

Specific actions:

- Progressive implementation of the National Programme for PCA implementation accordingly (start in 2006, but long term project);
- As an alternative commercial dispute resolution option, adopt legislation that ensures the implementation of arbitration procedures according to international standards;

Priority area 6:

Development of an energy strategy, including an early decommissioning of the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant (MNPP)

Specific actions:

- Adopt (in 2007) and start to implement a comprehensive energy strategy, which converges increasingly with EU energy policy objectives. The strategy should aim at energy sector development, modernisation and input of modern energy efficient technologies as well as accelerating energy sector reform including setting an early closure date for the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant. It should deal with the consequences of an early closure of the Medzamor plant and should also address a reasonable level of security of the energy sector including diversification of energy sources by routes and types and the development of own resources, including hydropower, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources. The strategy should also ensure transparency concerning procedures and operations in the energy sector;
- Adopt a radioactive waste management strategy;
- Continue to cooperate towards the early closure of the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant;
- Develop and adopt legal and technical measures including a decommissioning plan with time schedules and cost evaluation for each measure necessary for the decommissioning of the Medzamor NPP (starting in 2006, ending in 2007);
- Continue on-site cooperation regarding the Medzamor NPP in order to contribute to operational safety until it is shut down, as well as continue support to the Armenian Nuclear Regulatory Authority to ensure its independence and technical competence;
- Effectively establish a nuclear decommissioning fund in 2006, necessary for implementation of the above mentioned decommissioning plan and start to fill it up appropriately (starting as from 2006);
- Continue dialogue, including on possible funding, on decommissioning and addressing the consequences of an early closure of Medzamor, including replacement with base load capacity;

Priority area 7:

Contribute to a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict;

Specific actions:

- Increase diplomatic efforts, including through the EUSR, and continue to support a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict;
- Increase political support to the OSCE Minsk Group conflict settlement efforts on the basis of international norms and principles, including the principle of self-determination of peoples;
- Encourage people to people contacts ;
- Intensify the EU dialogue with the parties concerned with a view to the acceleration of the negotiations towards a political settlement;

Priority area 8:

Enhanced efforts in the field of regional cooperation

Specific actions:

- Continue efforts, in cooperation with neighbouring countries, to resolve regional and other related issues and to promote reconciliation;
- Enhance participation in regional cooperation initiatives in the Southern Caucasus, e.g. environment, water management, energy, education, border management, transport and transport communication, as well as in the parliamentary sphere, to assist collaboration in the stated fields;
- Continue cooperation in the energy and transport fields in the context of the EU/Black Sea/Caspian littoral states and neighbouring countries initiative;
- Strengthen Armenia's participation in regional law enforcement cooperation initiatives in Southern Caucasus, including through EC-funded regional assistance initiatives such as Southern Caucasus Action Programme on Drugs (SCAD);
- Support the Caucasus Regional Environmental Centre in meeting its objective to promote co-operation between Governmental and non-Governmental actors in the region, as well as enhance participation in its work;

- Enhance bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea region – including strengthened regional economic cooperation through continued engagement with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation (BSEC) – and between the Black Sea and Baltic Sea regions;
- Enhance youth exchanges and cooperation, among the three Southern Caucasus countries including particularly through EU programmes and initiatives;

Progress in meeting these priorities will be monitored in the bodies established by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the European Commission will issue a mid-term report on progress accomplished. On the basis of this assessment, the EU, together with Armenia will review the content of the Action Plan and decide on its adaptation and renewal. The Commission will issue a second report towards the end of five years and on this basis, decisions may be taken on the next step in the development of bilateral relations, including the possibility of new enhanced contractual links.

4. GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

These further actions complement, in many cases, the specific priorities for action listed above.

4.1. Political dialogue and reform

4.1.1. Democracy and the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms

Strengthening the stability and effectiveness of institutions guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law
Strengthening democratic institutions

- – Strengthen local self-government, including capacities of local communities and civil service institutions, in line with European standards and ensure implementation of the European Charter of Local Self Government ;
- – Strengthening political pluralism by encouraging co-operation between Armenian and EU political parties and legislative bodies;
- – Establish clear and transparent rules on party financing;

Reform of the judiciary

- Further improve training of judges, prosecutors and officials in the judiciary, Ministry of Justice administration, police and prisons, in particular with regard to human rights issues and judicial international co-operation;
- Establish an effective system of continued training for judges;
- Establish a school for training of candidate judges and staff the judiciary with highly qualified professionals;
- Increase the transparency and predictability of judicial acts particularly through creating an effective system of publication of judicial acts;
- Enhance training of prosecutors , administrators, officials in the Ministry of Justice, police, prisons, particularly in the area of protection of human rights;
- Introduce a modern system of judicial administration;
- Increase state budget financing of the courts up to proper level;
- Increase the effectiveness of implementation of judicial acts envisaging alternative bodies (services) for enforcement of these acts;

Strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

- Facilitate development of civil society;
- Ensure ratification and implementation of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- Continue efforts to ensure trade union's rights and core labour standards, based on European standards and in accordance with relevant ILO conventions;
- Ensure respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities;

- Continue efforts to ensure the equality of men and women in society and economic life by implementing the adopted "National Plan for Improving the Status of Women and Enhancing their Role in Society";

Civil service reform

- Establish a unified and transparent system of recruitment for civil servants and develop incentives to promote public integrity through the establishment of merit-based payment structures. Promote the improvement of coherent civil service policy mechanisms and strengthen administrative capacity.
- Promote a merit-based system of payment for civil servants and introduce a rational system of evaluation of work performed;
- Support the improvement of civil service system activities and institutions (job advertisement / selection, appraisal, civil service passports etc.) and bring them in line with European standards;
- Support the improvement of educational and training programs for civil servants (in particular those related to computer and management skills, foreign languages, ethics code etc) in accordance with European standards;
- Establish a coordination network between the relevant authorities of civil service systems of EU Member States and Armenia, to ensure harmonisation of legislation (and other relevant activities) and exchange of best practices and data;

Fight against corruption

- Ensure an adequate prosecution and conviction of bribery and corruption-related offences by improving procedures on appeals to courts against administrative decisions, taking into account the establishment of administrative courts in 2006 following the signature of the UN Convention against Corruption in May 2005;
- Ensure that the Criminal Code, in particular the definition of bribery and corruption-related offences, is in line with international standards such as the UN Convention on Corruption, the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption and Civil Law Convention on Corruption and, once ratified, the OECD Convention on combating bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, in order to ensure adequate prosecution and conviction;
- Implement and enforce specific anti-corruption measures within the law enforcement agencies (police, state border service and judiciary), including the development of Codes of Ethics for prosecutors and judges and the implementation of the European Code of Police Ethics as adopted by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers on 19 September 2001;
- Ensure the effective monitoring of the declaration of assets and income by officials through an amendment to the Law on Declaration of Assets and Income by High-level State Officials to establish sanctions in case of wrong declarations;
- Ensure progress in implementing the recommendations of the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO);
- Ensure the possibility of court appeals against all levels of administrative acts, including through establishment of administrative courts in 2006;
- Increase the salary of judges to a level which ensures service with dignity in order to reduce corruption;
- Ensure the implementation of procedures to implement the Codes of Ethics for judges and prosecutors including the introduction of effective oversight systems to monitor the compliance of judges and prosecutors with the Code of Ethics;

4.1.2. Cooperation on foreign and security policy, conflict prevention and crisis management

Strengthen political dialogue and cooperation on foreign and security matters

- Continue and develop EU-Armenian political dialogue on regional and international issues, including in the framework of the Council of Europe, OSCE and UN, and on the implementation of the European Security Strategy;
- Develop cooperation on sanctions issued by the EU, including arms embargoes;

- Develop an enhanced political dialogue and regular exchange of information on Common Foreign and Security Policy including European Security and Defence Policy;
- The EU may invite Armenia on a case-by-case basis to align itself with the EU's positions on regional and international issues;
- Initiate the accession to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;
- Make the necessary legislative and constitutional amendments for its implementation;
- Fight against international crime in accordance with international law, giving due regard to preserving the integrity of the Rome Statute;

Further develop co-operation in addressing common security threats, including non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and illegal arms exports

- Cooperate on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and ballistic missiles, including through implementing UNSC resolution 1540/04, ensuring full compliance with and national implementation of existing international obligations and promoting the accession to and implementation of other relevant international instruments and export control regimes;
- In this context, continue the existing dialogue on joint policy of non proliferation through enhancing the present cooperation between our researchers being involved in activities aimed at helping the former weapon of mass destruction scientists and engineers to redirect their talents to civilian and sustainable activities in the context of the International Science and Technology Centre (ISTC);
- Further develop co-operation in the prevention of and fight against the illicit trafficking of materials that are used in the manufacture of WMD;
- Co-operate on developing effective systems of national export control, controlling export and transit of WMD related goods, including WMD end-use control on dual use of goods and technologies, and effective sanctions for breaches of export controls;
- Improve overall co-ordination in the non-proliferation area and examine specific threats related to WMD which undermine regional security and the scope of co-operation in addressing them;
- Cooperate on implementing the provisions of the OSCE Document on SALW, OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition and OSCE Best Practice Guide on SALW;
- Improve internal legislation in line with the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports;
- As soon as conditions permit accede to the 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction.

Strengthen efforts and cooperation in the fight against terrorism

- Strengthen EU-Armenia co-operation in the fight against and prevention of terrorism;
- Cooperate to reinforce the role of the UN in the multilateral fight against terrorism, including through implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1373/01, 1267/99, and 1566/04 and 1624/05 and through ratification and implementation of all relevant UN Conventions including the UN Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism ;
- Work towards the establishment of an information exchange system between relevant judicial bodies and law enforcement agencies of the EU Member States and Armenia;
- Implement the standards laid down in the FATF's recommendations on terrorist financing;
- Ensure respect of human rights in the fight against terrorism.

4.1.3. Regional cooperation

Participation in regional cooperation initiatives

- Enhance and develop new areas of cooperation in the Southern Caucasus, including through EU-funded regional assistance initiatives detailed in the relevant sectors of this Action Plan e.g. environment, water management, energy, transport, education; border management; as well as the parliamentary dimension;

- Develop cooperation in the Southern Caucasus in different spheres of civil emergency management as well as protection against seismic and other natural disasters with a view to exchange experience and information;
- Continue to participate in the South Caucasus Parliamentary Initiative with a view to forming a full South Caucasus parliamentary process.
- Promote and support people to people contacts at all levels.
- Consider possibilities of introducing a Euroregion cooperation model in the Southern Caucasus.

4.2. Contribute to a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

Promote sustained efforts towards the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict

- Increase political support to the OSCE Minsk Group conflict settlement efforts on the basis of international norms and principles, including the principle of self-determination of peoples;
- Explore possibilities to provide EU support for humanitarian and de-mining initiatives
- promote measures to assist refugees and IDPs;
- promote the active involvement of civil society;
- Reinforce the cooperation on these and other matters in support of conflict resolution with the EU Special Representative for the Southern Caucasus;

4.3. Economic and social reform, poverty reduction and sustainable development

Further enhance economic development

- Continue reforms in the area of public finance management, including improvement of the quality of fiscal information and the preparation of a public investment plan (PIP) to improve strategic planning of capital expenditures;
- Continued public sector modernisation, in order to provide better access to basic services for all;

Further progress in poverty reduction

- Introduce effective employment creation and poverty reduction measures aimed at significant reduction in the number of people with income below the poverty line and improved social cohesion, including sustainable systems for education, health and other social services with access for all
- Improve awareness concerning PRSP at local government level, within the business community, the National Assembly and others players concerned;
- Introduce a sustainable pension system by following the "three pillar approach";
- Improve especially the welfare of most vulnerable groups;

Enhance agricultural development and production

- Further implement the reform strategy for the agricultural sector providing for the structural, institutional, legal and administrative support necessary to foster rural development and the development of quality production (local products, organic products, geographical indications, etc.), to encourage diversification of activities and to ease access to export markets and also to reduce poverty;
- Identify and develop measures to improve access to credit facilities to encourage private investment in the agricultural sector;
- Develop and introduce an agricultural support system which is in line with WTO rules and replaces the existing system of VAT tax privileges;
- Develop the forest industry (forest management, protection, maintenance, rehabilitation, balanced and sustainable use of forest resources);

Improve market economy functioning and strengthen economic growth through structural reforms

- Strengthen the business environment and promote financial intermediation through the PRSP implementation process, including through action plans developed in consultation with private sector representatives

Promotion of sustainable development

- Develop a National Strategy on Sustainable Development;
- Establish administrative structures and procedures to ensure strategic planning of sustainable development and co-ordination between relevant actors;
- Take steps to improve integration of environmental considerations into other policy sectors;

4.4. Trade-related issues, market and regulatory reform

4.4.1. Movement of goods

Trade relations

Improve trade relations and movement of goods

- Enhance EU-Armenia bilateral trade through ensuring full implementation of Armenia's relevant PCA obligations
- Monitor compliance with WTO rules in the framework of existing WTO rules and procedures;
- Enhance staff training and capacity building on international trade relations;
- Undertake measures to improve benefits from the Generalised System of Preferences and thereby improving Armenia's export performance;
- The EU and Armenia will jointly explore possible options to further enhance bilateral trade relations, including the possible establishment of a free trade agreement between the EU and Armenia. In this context, the Commission will undertake a feasibility study which will also look at regional trade and economic integration aspects;

Customs

- Continue harmonisation and simplification of customs legislation, including secondary legislation in the customs area;
- Reinforce customs controls on imports and exports of pirated or counterfeit goods ;
- Strengthen co-operation between customs and other agencies, including those working at the border;
- Develop EU-Armenia co-operation with regard to customs control based on selectivity ensuring safety and security of goods imported, exported or in transit;
- Develop EU-Armenia co-operation on the definition of standards for certification of importers, exporters and transporters, based on best EU practices;

Standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures (EU harmonised areas)

Move toward EU and international legislative and administrative practices for standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment (EU harmonized areas)

- Jointly identify priority industrial sectors for possible legislative approximation (with the possibility to be included in an Agreement on Conformity Assessment and the Acceptance of Industrial Products, ACAA, provided that all the required conditions are accepted and fulfilled) including through consultations with producers and exporters. Continue efforts for the completion of the process of translating relevant EU standards into Armenian;
- Harmonise the necessary legislation with EU technical legislation in the priority sectors;
- Strengthen the institutions in charge of standardisation, accreditation, conformity assessment, metrology and market surveillance; integrate them to the extent possible within European and international structures;
- Simplify procedures of conformity assessment of industrial products, with the aim of avoiding compulsory certification of low risk products and repeat testing;
- Develop market surveillance capacities based on best practice of EU Member States.
- Examine possibilities for free access to EU database on standards;

Restrictions and streamlined administration (EU non-harmonized areas)

- Analyse legislation and administrative procedures with a view to identifying and progressively removing discrimination and restrictions against imported products;

- Designate a central contact point to facilitate information flows and co-operation with economic operators;

Sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues

Increase food safety for consumers and facilitate trade through reforms and modernisation of the sanitary and phyto-sanitary sectors

- Continue work towards full implementation of the WTO agreement on the application of Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures and active participation in relevant international bodies (World Organisation for Animal Health, OIE, Codex Alimentarius);
- Exchange information on and explore possible areas of convergence with EU practice in the field of sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues (e.g. policy, legislation, strengthening of institutions including laboratories, implementing practices);
- In the medium-term, draw up a first list of measures for gradual convergence towards EU general food safety principles and requirements (e.g. regulation 178/2002/EC; animal and plant or plant products identification and traceability systems; hygiene in food processing); start approximation of Armenian legislation in this area;
- Implement EU requirements on animal health and for the processing of animal products (c.f.: "General Guidance for third country authorities on the procedures to be followed when importing live animals and animal products into the European Union", DG SANCO/FVO October 2003);
- Work towards interconnection with the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed;

4.4.2. Right of establishment, Company Law and Services

Right of establishment and Company Law

Full implementation of PCA commitments in title IV, Chapter II (Conditions affecting establishment and operation of companies) and Title VI art. 45 (Investment promotion and protection)

- Ensure full application of the best endeavour standstill clause so that the conditions for establishment of companies are not more restrictive than when the PCA was concluded;
- Enhance administrative capacity of the Armenian Development Agency (ADA) and ensure its effective functioning;
- Converge with and ensure effective implementation of key principles on company law, accounting and auditing in relevant international and EU rules and standards;
- Improve consistency and predictability in the administrative and judicial authorities responsible for oversight of company law and related investment conditions;
- Ensure effective functioning of a public register of undertakings and the publication of certain information such as the company's organisation and financial details in a 'national official gazette' comparable to those in the EU;
- Upgrade and ensure effective implementation of legislation on corporate governance;
- Enhance corporate disclosure and audit standards;
- Improve bankruptcy legislation and ensure efficient implementation, in particular by increasing transparency of the process;

Services

Gradual abolition of restrictions to progressively allow the supply of services between the EU and Armenia in certain sectors, in line with PCA commitments in Title IV, Chapter III (Cross-border supply of services)

- Complete a review of national legislation by Armenia so as to identify barriers to the provision of services with the aim of abolishing them;
- Establish and ensure effective implementation of appropriate administrative structures including a central co-ordinating body with the aim of facilitating the supply of services.

Financial services

- Comply with the recommendations of the IMF's Financial Sector Assessment Programme (FSAP) dating from May 25, 2005;
- Enhancement of a prudential regulatory framework for financial services and supervision equivalent to that existing in the EU;
- Put into place and ensure effective implementation of independent supervisory authorities in accordance with internationally recognised standards.
- Develop an insurance market in line with EU standards;

4.4.3. Movement of capital and current payments

Ensure full application of PCA commitments under Chapter V (Current Payments and capital)

- Ensure the free movement of capital relating to direct investment made in companies and other investments made in accordance with the provisions on Establishment (Chapter II of Title IV of PCA);
- Ensure the protection of such foreign investments and the liquidation and repatriation of profits and capital;

4.4.4. Movement of persons, including movement of workers

Full implementation of commitments under Article 20 of PCA (labour conditions)

- Ensure full application of the best endeavour clause by abolishing all discriminatory measures based on nationality which affect migrant workers, as regards working conditions, remuneration or dismissal.

4.4.5. Other key areas

Taxation

- Continue the implementation of IMF recommendations, including the adoption of a unified tax code;
- Develop the tax system of Armenia in accordance with general EU and international principles;
- Initiate a dialogue on the principles of the EU Code of Conduct for Business Taxation with a view to ensuring fair conditions for Armenia during its process of integration into the internal market;

Competition policy

Converge with EU principles on Competition according to Title V article 43 of the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement

- Examine the possibility of establishing full transparency as regards State aid granted in Armenia, in particular by (i) drawing up a complete list of aid grantors, (ii) creating a national mechanism for centralising all information on state aid granted in Armenia, with a view to drawing up annual reports on the amounts, types and recipients of aid.

Anti trust and control on state aid policy

- Enhance the administrative capacity and the independence of the State Commission on the Protection of Economic Competition;
- Ensure adequate legal powers for the competition agency, including the right to carry out on-the-spot checks.

Intellectual and industrial property rights

- Ensure full conformity of IPR legislation with PCA obligations and TRIPS requirements and its effective enforcement;
- Ensure proper functioning of the judicial system to guarantee access to justice for right-holders and availability and effective implementation of sanctions;
- Consolidate the relevant institutional structures, as well as of the offices for industrial property rights, copyright protection and collecting societies. Extend cooperation with third country authorities and industry associations;
- Increase resources dedicated to enforcement, including for the judicial system;;
- Improve enforcement of the relevant conventions provided for by PCA Article 42(2);

- Develop cooperation between Armenian and EU law enforcement bodies in the fight against crimes in the field of intellectual property;

Public procurement

Develop conditions for open and competitive award of contracts between the parties, in particular through calls for tenders, in line with Article 48 of the PCA and continue reforms in the public procurement system

- Ensure implementation of the (public) Procurement Law;
- Ensure compliance of the procurement system with EU procurement legislation and principles, in particular transparency, information provision, access to legal recourse, awareness and training among contracting authorities and business community as well as limited use of exceptions
- Review existing procedures and improve the administrative capacity of the State Procurement Agency;
- Ensure implementation of the "Strategy for Introduction of an Electronic Procurement System in Armenia";
- Accede to the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement.

Statistics

Adoption of statistical methods fully compatible with European standards and advance the modernisation of the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia

- Elaborate and implement a short and medium term development strategy for harmonisation with European standards in the relevant statistical areas, based on a global assessment of the Armenian statistical system by EU experts;
- Improve the quality and coverage of the business register;
- Prepare and implement an agricultural census according to FAO guidelines;

Public Internal Financial Control and related issues

Sound management and control of public finances

- Promote the development of appropriate administrative capacity to prevent and fight effectively fraud and other irregularities affecting national and international funds, including the establishment of well-functioning structures involving all relevant national entities;
- Improve public finance management and transparency, notably through the implementation of the Second Generation Treasury System and Public Sector Accounting Reform Programme and the development and introduction of an integrated information system for public finance management including state non-commercial organisations.
- Ensure effective cooperation with the relevant EU Institutions and bodies in the case of on-the-spot checks and inspections related to the management and control of EU funds;

Public Internal Financial Control

- Introduce, in close cooperation with IMF and World Bank, a public internal financial control system for the entire public sector based on the principles of managerial accountability and functionally independent internal audit in compliance with internationally agreed standards (IFAC, IIA and INTOSAI) and methodologies;
- Ensure the implementation of the reform programme for the internal audit system approved by the Government of Armenia that includes the development of an internal audit framework in the public sector of Armenia in compliance with international standards (IFAC, IIA, INTOSAI);

External Audit

- Further strengthen the Chamber of Control (independence, organizational capacity, audit, methodology, financial and human resources) as supreme audit institution in Armenia, in line with the internationally accepted and EU best practice external audit standards (INTOSAI standards).

Enterprise policy

Develop and strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises and their associations and cooperation between SMEs in the Community and Armenia in line with article 62 of the PCA

- Support the development of SMEs in Armenia by creating an appropriate legislative framework and appropriate infrastructure, as provided for in Article 62 of the PCA;
- Promote the exchange of information and of best practice on EU enterprise and industrial policy and associate Armenia to EU initiatives to stimulate competitiveness, (e.g. exchange of information, participation in networks and studies, training);
- Explore the need and possible options for launching a dialogue on enterprise and industrial policy.

4.5. Cooperation in the Field of Justice, Freedom and Security

Enhance dialogue and cooperation on Justice, Freedom and Security issues

4.5.1. Cooperation on border management

Intensify trans-border cooperation between Armenia, the EU Member States and neighbouring countries

- Envisage a "BOMCA type" technical assistance programme in the Southern Caucasus region in order to develop regional co-operation between relevant law enforcement bodies (State Border Service, Police, migration services and Customs);

4.5.2. Migration issues (legal and illegal migration, readmission, visa, asylum)

Develop cooperation on migration issues

- Elaborate and start implementing a comprehensive, coherent and balanced national Action Plan on migration and asylum issues;
- Provide assistance in labour migration management;
- Exchange of information and possible cooperation on transit migration;
- Establishment of an electronic database for the monitoring of migration flows;
- Make all possible use of existing Community programs, including AENEAS and its successor, in order to support actions in the field of asylum and migration;

Enhanced dialogue on migration issues including prevention and control of illegal migration and readmission of own nationals, stateless persons and third country nationals

- Exchange of information and best practices on migration and asylum issues (entry and stay, integration, temporary protection, EURODAC system, reception conditions for asylum seekers, detention of illegal migrants) and illegal migration;
- Initiate a dialogue on readmission at EU level which could possibly lead to an EC-Armenia readmission agreement; exchange of experience and expertise about the practical implications of such an agreement; pending the negotiation of an EC agreement on readmission, enhance practical cooperation with EU Member States;
- Develop cooperation with international organisations and relevant agencies of main countries of origin, transit and destination in order to manage migration processes.
- Develop and implement measures aimed at assisting reintegration of returnees/ repatriates;

Take steps to modernise the national refugee system in line with international standards and an IDP protection system that is self-sustaining and that offers integration opportunities for those who qualify

- Implement the principles of the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol; improve national legislation on asylum and refugees to bring it in line with international and EU standards;
- Implement standard procedures relating to treatment of asylum applications, in accordance with EU and other international standards;
- Strengthen administrative capacities of the Migration Agency of the Ministry of Territorial Administration;
- Improve protection for and support to refugees and IDPs, in particular to enhance their self-sufficiency and integration (possibly targeting the most vulnerable persons residing in temporary shelters and rural areas; possible actions: promotion of self-employment and small businesses, improvement of residential conditions of people residing in temporary shelters).

Facilitate the movement of persons

- Exchange of information on visa issues;
- Cooperate to improve security of travel documents and visa in conformity with international standards, including the introduction of biometric features in passports;
- Establish within existing PCA mechanisms a dialogue on migration issues including prevention and fight against illegal immigration, readmission of own nationals, stateless persons and third country nationals and visa issues;

4.5.3. Fight against organised crime, trafficking in human beings, drugs and money-laundering

Strengthen efforts and co-operation in the fight against organised crime

- Implement the UN Convention against trans-national organised crime;
- Accede to the protocol to the above mentioned UN Convention on illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition;
- Cooperate with EU law enforcement agencies and international organisations in new crime areas, e.g. Information and Communication Technology related crime, in particular child pornography. Establish a central point to assess reports of illegal content in internet and take appropriate actions;

Reinforce the fight against trafficking in human beings, especially in women and children, (as well as activities to integrate the victims of such trafficking) and smuggling of illegal migrants

- Implement the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Trafficking of Persons, as adopted in January 2004, in line with the two "Palermo" Protocols to the UN Convention against trans-national organised crime, on smuggling of migrants and on trafficking in persons;
- Implement actions recommended by OSCE action plan to combat trafficking in Human Beings (approved in Maastricht December 2003, Chapters III, IV and V) and enhance co-operation in the framework of relevant international organisations (OSCE, UN);
- Promote exchange of information between Armenia and EU Member States as well as encourage co-operation between relevant law enforcement bodies (police, border guards, customs and judiciary) at regional level;
- Develop mechanisms of protection, assistance and rehabilitation for victims;

Further strengthen the fight against illicit drug trafficking, including precursor diversion, and against drug abuse in particular through prevention and rehabilitation of drug addicts

- Continue implementing the 1988 UN Convention on Illicit Traffic of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances;
- Reinforce national legislation and develop a national anti-drug strategy, covering drug supply and demand, including prevention programmes and programmes for treatment of drug addicts; Develop the capacity of relevant law-enforcement authorities;
- Enhance strategic and operational cooperation with Black Sea and Caspian Sea littoral neighbouring countries with a view to better intercept narcotics shipments originating from Afghanistan.

Strengthen efforts and co-operation in the fight against money laundering

- Strengthen co-operation between the Central Bank, financial institutions, international financial institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, the IFC and the EBRD, and law enforcement agencies in order to make the financial institutions and other relevant entities, including casinos, aware of the obligations and responsibilities arising from the new legislation on money-laundering, in particular by paying attention to know your customer (KYC) principles;
- ratify and implement the 2005 Convention on laundering, search, seizure and confiscation of the proceeds from crime and on the financing of terrorism, which is its natural follow-up;
- ensure that money laundering regulations apply to the charities sector; exchange information and expertise on possible issues arising from their application;
- Exchange information on the existing European structures and the existing system in Armenia as regards the fight against money laundering;

- Improve the inter-institutional data-base on suspicious transactions of the Financial Observation Centre of the CBA, also by soft ware provision;
- Promote application of effective sanctions against money laundering;
- Develop a training programme for the staff of the FIU, judges, prosecutors, and all other relevant personnel;
- Intensify co-operation and promote exchange of information among law enforcement agencies; intensify co-operation with Moneyval, FATF-style regional bodies (possibly the Eurasian Group), as well as with corresponding services of EU Member states and specialised bodies at European level;
- Envisage membership of the CBA's Financial Observation Centre in the Egmont Group in order to effectively exchange information with Foreign Financial Intelligence Units;

4.5.4. Police and judicial co-operation

Develop international and regional judicial and law enforcement cooperation

- Fully implement relevant international conventions on cooperation in criminal and civil law, in particular;
- Accede and implement the Second Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters;
- Accede and implement the 1980 Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction;
- Improve inter-agency and international cooperation, in particular enhance law enforcement cooperation with neighbouring States in the Black Sea region and in the Caspian Sea region;

Further develop co-operation between Armenia and EU Member State judicial and law enforcement authorities

- Establish a network of contact points with EU Member States judicial and law enforcement authorities with a view to develop cooperation and exchange information;
- Exchange information on best practices in judicial co-operation between EU Member States and Armenia;
- Explore the possibilities for co-operation between Armenia law enforcement agencies and EUROPOL in accordance with the Europol Convention and the relevant Council decisions;
- Accede and implement the 1981 Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data.

4.6. Cooperation in specific sectors, including transport, energy, environment

4.6.1. Transport

Elaborate and start implementing a national transport strategy, including transport infrastructure development

- Start to develop a national sustainable transport policy, with a focus, where appropriate on further approximation of legislative and regulatory frameworks with European and international standards, in particular for safety and security (all transport modes);
- Strengthen the regulatory and sector oversight capacities of the Ministry;
- Creation of a long-term and transparent system of road financing in order to ensure continued maintenance of the existent public road network;
- Develop co-operation in satellite navigation (including joint research actions and applications).

Implement selected measures and reforms in the road transport sector

- Develop and implement a road safety action plan (including among others road traffic safety and security, safety of the public, dangerous goods transport and vehicles' roadworthiness) for improving road safety;

Implement selected measures and reforms in the railway transport sector

- Improve safety, speed and efficiency (interoperability) of rail transport services and continue reforms in the operational and financial management.

Implement selected measures and reforms in the aviation sector

- Conclude negotiations on a (horizontal) agreement on certain aspects of air services with the European Community (until end of 2007);
- Promote regulatory approximation, including on safety and security issues.

Regional transport co-operation

- Continue active co-operation in the follow-up to the EU-Black Sea-Caspian Basin Ministerial Transport Conference and in the development of the Pan-European Corridors and Areas (in particular through the High Level Working Group follow up) as well as in the TRACECA programme
- Implement the recommendations of the High Level Group on the Extension of Major Trans-European Transport Axes to the Neighbouring Countries concerning transport axes and related horizontal measures;
- Address the issue of Turkish-Armenian relations in the context of movement of goods and people and regional cooperation and development;

4.6.2. Energy

Energy policy convergence towards EU energy policy objectives

- Explore the medium-term possibility for participation in the Intelligent Energy-Europe programme.

Gradual convergence towards the principles of the EU internal electricity and gas markets

- Establish a list of measures for gradual legal and regulatory convergence towards the principles of the EU internal electricity and gas markets, accompanied by time schedules and a financing plan;
- Further develop the Public Service Regulatory Commission in line with the principles of the Electricity and Gas Directives 2003/54 and 2003/55;
- Further develop the electricity, gas and heat sectors including the development of new capacity to ensure a base load capacity regime; ensure the financial viability of the sectors;

Progress regarding energy networks (in particular electricity, natural gas)

- Take steps to reduce energy network losses;
- Improve the safety and security of energy infrastructure;
- Continue, including in the context of an early closure of the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant, the development of energy networks and infrastructure (e.g. assess the potential for new networks and interconnections; develop underground gas storage).

Progress on energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources

- Take steps to develop an Action Plan including a financial and legislative plan as well as economic mechanisms for improving energy efficiency and enhancing the use of renewable energy including hydropower;
- Reinforce the institutions dealing with energy efficiency and renewable energy sources;
- Implement a set of measures in this area.

Continue co-operation on nuclear safety and radioactive source security

- Take measures to strengthen control of all types of radioactive sources including with the aim of avoiding illicit trafficking of them as well as any other radioactive materials;

Regional energy cooperation

- Continue cooperation on Caspian and Black Sea regional energy issues, including as regards access to energy networks, trade and transit, including in the context of INOGATE and the follow-up to the Caspian energy Ministerial Conference of November 2004;
- With a view to regional integration and progressive integration with the EU, encourage the development of a diversified infrastructure connected to the development of Caspian energy resources and facilitate transit;

4.6.3. Information Society and media

Progress in the development and use of Information Society applications

- Elaborate a national policy on the development of the sector including regulatory, economic, technological and social aspects, including advanced services and promote the use and exchange of views on new technologies and electronic means of communications by businesses, government and citizens in areas such as e-Business (including standards for e-signatures), e-Government, e-Health, e-Learning, e-Culture;
- Work towards adopting a comprehensive regulatory framework including licensing, access and interconnection, cost-orientation of tariffs, numbering, Universal Service and users rights, privacy protection and data security;
- Work towards adopting audiovisual legislation in full compliance with European standards with a view to future participation in international instruments of the Council of Europe in the field of media. Promote an exchange of views on audiovisual policy, including co-operation in the fight against racism and xenophobia;
- Switch from an analog to a digital system in the field of radio and television and approximate digital television and audio broadcasting to European standards;

Regional ITC Cooperation

- Facilitate the interconnection of the Caucasian National Research and Education Networks with their European counterparts via GEANT in order to support scientific collaboration;
- Develop distance education programmes in the Southern Caucasus;

4.6.4. Environment

Take steps to ensure that conditions for good environmental governance are set and start implementing them

- Strengthen administrative structures and procedures to ensure strategic planning of environment issues and co-ordination between relevant actors;
- Establish procedures regarding access to environmental information and public participation, including implementation of the Aarhus Convention;
- Prepare regular reports on the state-of-the-environment;
- Reinforce structures and procedures to carry out environmental impact assessments;
- Establish communication strategies on the benefits of environmental policy; support civil society actors and local authorities.

Take action for prevention of deterioration of the environment, protection of human health, and achievement of rational use of natural resources in line with the commitments of Johannesburg Summit

- Develop legislation and basic procedures and ensure planning for key environmental sectors, including in particular as specified in the national environmental action plan (air quality, water quality, waste management and nature protection);
- Enhance administrative capacities, including for the issuing of permits as well as for enforcement and inspection;
- Further develop and implement existing national plans and programmes on biodiversity and specially protected areas, integrated water resource management, waste management and desertification;

Enhance co-operation on environmental issues

- Implement provisions under the Kyoto Protocol and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- Ensure active participation in the Eastern European, Caucasus and Central Asia component of the EU Water Initiative;
- Ratify relevant UN-ECE Conventions on the environment;
- Identify possibilities with neighbouring countries for enhanced regional co-operation, in particular with regard to water issues;
- Possible participation in selected European Environment Agency activities.

4.6.5. Science and technology, research and development

Develop Armenia's capacity in R&D to support the economy and society

- Develop a Research and Innovation policy directly relevant to the sustainable and equitable economic development policy objectives of Armenia and its region, including through an appropriate programme of reforms in the scientific system of Armenia and in the relevant regulatory framework.
 - Reinforce human, material and institutional resources in order to improve capacities in R&D, including through adequate and increased investment in research through the public sector as well as through the private sector;
 - Establish an independent expert body for competitive selection of scientific programmes in Armenia;
- Prepare and encourage Armenia's integration into the European Research Area and into Community R&D Framework Programmes on the basis of scientific excellence
- Encourage adequate participation of Armenian research entities in the Community R&D Framework Programmes and joint projects and determine the particular priorities and the specific needs of Armenia through an appropriate policy – driven dialogue;
 - Support Armenia's integration in high-level scientific exchanges by reinforcing Armenian participation in international Marie Curie fellowships including support of the appropriate return mechanisms;

4.7. People-to people contacts

4.7.1. Education, training and youth

Reform and modernise the education and training systems within the framework of Armenian plans towards convergence with EU standards and practice

- Ensure continued access for all to high quality education by providing sufficient public funding, by providing transparency and accountability for the sector, by further reforming and rationalising education and training systems, including vocational education, training and lifelong learning in particular through implementation of a national education reform strategy;
- Reform the higher education sector in line with the principles of the "Bologna process" in order to facilitate the recognition of Armenia's higher education degrees and qualifications in the European higher education area and strengthen local capacities for policy development and implementation. Foster the development of human resources and human capital in a lifelong learning perspective. Promote reform of higher education and cooperation between higher education institutions in the EU and Armenia through the TEMPUS programme;
- Enhance the capacities of institutions and organisations involved in developing and implementing quality assurance in the field of education and training in line with European standards, by using for example the tools offered by the TEMPUS programme;
- Strengthen the adaptation of higher and vocational education to the demands of the labour market inter alia by increasing the financing by employers and the involvement of social partners and stakeholders from civil society;
- Ensure democratic and decentralised management of education involving parents and students;
- Strengthen emphasis on human and children rights and fundamental freedoms, promote education in sustainable development and introduce IT;
- Ensure the right of national minorities to receive education in their native languages within the secondary education system;

Enhance co-operation in the field of education, training and youth

- Continue and enhance a policy dialogue between EU and Armenian authorities in the field of education and training;
- Encourage student mobility through participation in the Erasmus Mundus programme, the TEMPUS programme and the new scholarship scheme;
- Enhance youth exchanges and cooperation, in particular among the three Southern Caucasus countries in partnership with their counterparts from the European Union, in the field of non-formal education for young people and promotion of intercultural dialogue through the YOUTH programme.

- Promote cooperation in the field of human rights education in order to combat racism and intolerance. Explore the scope for training in the fight against crimes against humanity;

4.7.2. Public Health

Health sector reform

- Continue health sector reform, notably to: improve access and affordability for the entire population in particular for social vulnerable groups, improve the organisation, the legal framework, quality and efficiency of the sector and its institutions including laboratories; train health workers including through exchange of information and experience; increase the share of primary health care services and of prevention and health promotion activities in the total health care budget; implement a sustainable healthcare finance strategy including a health insurance scheme; improve quality of and access to information on the health status, risks and determinants;

4.7.3. Culture

Enhance cultural co-operation

- Investigate the possibilities for co-operation, including promotion of Armenian cultural heritage in Europe, in the framework of EU programmes in the field of culture;

- Exchange views on the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions and promote ratification and implementation of the text;

5. MONITORING

The Action Plan will be submitted for formal adoption to the Co-operation Council between the EU and Armenia. The Action Plan will guide the work between the EU and Armenia. Should the need arise, on the EU side, for specific measures necessitating legally binding decisions, the Commission will recommend to the Council the adoption of the necessary negotiating directives.

The joint bodies established under the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement will advance and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan. The structures under the relevant agreements, where appropriate, should be reviewed, to ensure that all priorities under the ENP are duly reflected;

Progress in implementation of this Action Plan will be measured against jointly agreed benchmarks, and the Commission, in close cooperation with the Secretary-General/High Representative, as appropriate, will produce reports on the Action Plan's implementation at regular intervals. It will invite Armenia to provide information for these reports. The Commission will also work closely with other organisations such as the Council of Europe, the OSCE, relevant UN bodies, and International Financial Institutions.

A first review of the implementation of the Action Plan will be undertaken within two years of its adoption.

The Action Plan can be regularly amended and/or updated to reflect progress in addressing the priorities.

Glossary

BOMCA: Border Management Programme for Central Asia

EASA: European Aviation Safety Agency

EUPM: European Union Police Mission

EUPOL: European Union Police Mission

FATF: Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering

GATT: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

ICC: International Criminal Court

IFAC: International Federation of Accountants

IIA: Institute of Internal Audit

ILO: International Labour Organisation

INTOSAI: International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions

IST Information Society Technologies

NPP: Nuclear Power Plant

OSJD: Organisation for Railway Cooperation

OTIF: Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

SCAD Southern Caucasus Action Programme on Drugs

TRACECA: Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia

TRIPS: WTO Agreement on Intellectual Property

WHO World Health Organisation

WMD: Weapons of Mass Destruction

[1] KOM(2003) 104.

[2] KOM(2004) 373.

[3] KOM(2004) 795.

[4] KOM(2005) 72.

[5] EFT L 239/1999 p.1

[6] xxxxxx