**We condemn the open and demonstrative acts of violence of the police against citizens**

By carrying on its traditional practices during the protests of April 21, 2016 in front of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Armenia and of April 22 on Baghramyan Avenue, by involving excessive police forces against the peaceful protesters and by demonstratively and violently breaking the regulations of the RA Law on Freedom of Assembly, the RA Police did not ensure safety and exercise of a peaceful protest, but rather apprehended peaceful protesters (according to official data, about 42 persons) to police stations and used physical violence against the journalists of 1in.am news website by breaking their devices.

Also, upon the end of the protest in front of the Russian Embassy, A. Karapetyan, Chief of Police of Yerevan, summoned Shahen Harutyunyan to the police station without any legal grounds and threatened him that in case of his further participation in protests, criminal prosecution might be initiated against him.

Along with the illegal actions of the police officers, the high-ranking police officials provided no explanations for their actions, by demonstrating their open irresponsibility and impunity towards the public.

We hereby find that such illegal actions of the police were caused by the inadmissible delay by the RA Special Investigation Service of the criminal proceedings initiated on the facts of illegal mass actions by the police on June 23, 2015 and the lack of the expected legal assessment, which led to the continuous impunity of the police towards the RA citizens and yet another demonstration of irresponsible practices.

Unequivocally and without any reservations, we assess the police behavior and actions as illegal.

We believe that by their actions the police officers not only broke their functions prescribed by the RA legislation, but also abused them with the purpose of applying police leverages against the peaceful protesters by intimidating people and preventing them from voicing their protest and opinion.

In the context of the 4-day hostilities of April, 2016 and the casualties caused by them, over 100 wounded and the need to confront the external threats, not only do such practices by the RA Police against the RA citizens fail to arise from and comply with the principles of a democratic and legal state, but also further reduce the level of public trust in the authorities, which even so proves low. We consider such practices to constitute an action of dictatorial form of governance aimed against the social cohesion over democratic values ​​and principles.

We condemn the regular illegal actions of the police and believe that the Chief of RA Police and his deputies, as well as the Chief of Police of Yerevan, should immediately resign.

HCA Vanadzor

April 24, 2016