**Press release**

**July 8, 2016**

**On 21st court hearing of the murder of the Avetisyan family**

On July 8, 2016, the General Jurisdiction Court of Shirak Marz (Region) held on the territory of the Russian military base № 102 the 21st outgoing hearing of the murder of the Avetisyan family.

Representative of the victims’ legal successor, Attorney Lusine Sahakyan explained the grounds for submitting a self-recusation motion to Judge Harutyun Movsesyan. Namely, addressing the issue that during May 27, 2016 court hearing the Court had ruled to admit the civil claim by recognizing the Russian Federation as defendant party, and the legal successors to the victims as civil plaintiffs. Moreover, the previous court hearing was delayed for almost a month to translate the civil claim and send it to the Russian addressees, however, during the following court hearing the Court refused to admit the claim, thereby showing he was constrained by the positions of the Russian side, was biased and therefore could not conduct a fair trial.

The other representatives of the victim’s legal successors also joined the self-challenge motion to be posed to the Judge.

Representative of the victim’s legal successor, Chairman of Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly Vanadzor Artur Sakunts, who is convinced the motion will be declined, valorizes the presentation of justified grounds for the decision to reject the motion, because he believes the Court is biased even in this case.

The Court was announced to withdraw to the deliberation room for 1 working day to get familiarized with the submitted motion though the video material of the court hearing.

The Court’s ruling over the motion will be promulgated at 12:00pm, July 12, 2016.