

Annex  
to the Protocol Decision of the Sitting of the  
Government of the Republic of Armenia  
No 32 of 9 August 2012

**THIRD REPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA  
IN ACCORDANCE WITH POINT 1 OF ARTICLE 15  
OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES**

**Yerevan 2012**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. According to point 1 of Article 15 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Republic of Armenia submits the third report on the course of measures aimed at application of the principles of the Charter and of provisions of the Charter, as well as on results of the second stage of observations of the Committee of Experts on application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Armenia, on practical steps implemented at national level in the framework of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

2. The following has been accounted for in the report:

- “Recommendation RecChL(2009)4 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of Regional or Minority Languages in Armenia” - [translator’s note: the recommendation’s actual name is “Recommendation CM/RecChL(2009)4 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Armenia” according to the Council of Europe’s official website] adopted at the 1066th sitting of the Deputy Ministers of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe 23 September 2009: The ECRML(2009)6 report of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages – “On the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: application of the Charter by Armenia - the second stage of observations” .

3. The report presents issues connected with national minority languages, as the issue of a regional language does not exist in Armenia, and the Republic of Armenia, by ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, has undertaken to develop policy and define an action plan aimed at protection and development of national minority languages only (Russian, Greek, Yezidi, Kurdish and Assyrian). There are no other regional or minority languages in the Republic of Armenia apart from those specified by the decision on ratification of the Charter.

4. The report was prepared based on information provided by the staffs of the President of the Republic of Armenia and of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the Public Council of the Republic of Armenia, ministries and marzpetarans (regional governments); on the results of meetings organised in communities and education institutions of national minorities and on analysis of suggestions of representatives of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. The draft report has been provided to the structures responsible for works aimed at application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and considerations presented have been taken into account.

5. The report has been prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. The report is comprised of an introduction, five parts and five annexes. The report does not cover analysis of socio-economic situation in the Republic of Armenia, however, it details that programmes connected with the five languages of the national minorities- Russian, Greek, Yezidi, Kurdish, Assyrian languages - safeguarded by the Republic of Armenia under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages could have received state assistance of greater scales, if there was no global economic crisis and if socio-economic issues in the country were solved.

## **Part 1**

### **Analysis of the situation**

6. Application of all the actions stemming from the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages has revealed number of issues, part of which have been introduced in the previous reports of the Republic. The issues are of common nature for the Republic of Armenia, their solution requires certain time, however, they affect also the

course of action ensuring application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Part of the issues are connected with the socio-economic situation, the other part are of legal nature, however there are also issues, which are subjective, for instance, the issue of staff numbers in general education schools of the Republic.

7. The Public Council was established in the Republic of Armenia in 2008 - being a consultative body formed by the President of the Republic of Armenia. In 2009 the Public Council has taken its final shape, which was enshrined by a decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia. The Public Council was established for the benefit of internal political solidarity and creation of civil society, taking into consideration the needs of various layers of the population. A committee on national minority issues was set up under the Public Council for the purpose of regulation of national minority issues; the committee consists of the following sub-committees:

- On socio-economic issues,
- On legal issues and international relations,
- On education, culture and linguistic issues.

The committee on national minority issues holds regular discussions and sittings, including field ones; issues connected with the course of implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, as well as suggestions and applications addressed to the Public Council are discussed.

8. The department of national minority and religion issues of the staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, established in 2004, continues to perform the analysis of programming of actions stemming from the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and coordination of the actions. Those are the process of awareness on national minority rights at local self-government bodies, organisation of seminars on the exercise of national minority rights, consultations on introduction of the programmes developed. The employees of the department on national minority and religion issues of the staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia organise consultations on regular basis with the purpose of informing representatives of national minorities on their rights and opportunities to receive education, at the same time trying to identify youth, who want to pursue perspective studies in the field of pedagogy and culture.

9. A portfolio of documents is posted at the official website of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (<http://gov.am/am/religion/>) with the purpose of informing stakeholder bodies, organisations and persons connected with the rights, obligations specified by the European Charter for the Regional or Minority Languages and the sphere of their exercise – international documents ratified by the Republic of Armenia and reports connected with them, legislation of the Republic of Armenia - in Armenian and Russian, opinions of the Committee of Experts of the European Council and comments regarding those. The portfolio of documents is updated on regular basis.
10. The employees of the department on national minority and religion issues of the staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia hold regular meetings with the stakeholders in the sphere - leaders of national minority NGOs, intelligentsia representing national minorities, religious leaders, as well as visit communities of national minorities on regular basis, where they meet community leaders, directors of schools and residents. The purpose of these meetings is to raise the level of awareness of the stakeholders and to monitor fulfilment of obligations assumed by the state on spot.
11. The Government of the Republic of Armenia, with the purpose of raising the level of awareness in areas populated with national minorities, has assigned the marzpetarans (regional municipalities) to post information on national minorities living in the marz (region), respective events held and projects implemented in the sphere, as well as to post a portfolio of documents related to the sphere.
12. Not only issues and programmes existing in the sphere are discussed during meetings held on regular basis by the department on national minority and religion issues of the staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia with the leaders of national minority NGOs, representatives-intelligentsia of national minorities, religious leaders, as well as community leaders, directors of schools and residents of communities of national minorities, but also a portfolio of documents related to national minorities is handed over to the participants via electronic media and in other formats and the content of the documents is presented and interpreted. Works aimed at gradual familiarisation of schoolchildren with the documents are carried out during the visits.
13. It is commonly known that Yezidis were considered Kurdish in the period starting from 1939 to 1989 and only Kurdish language was mentioned in all official documents and

education and culture institutions. As soon as the Republic of Armenia declared its independence, the ethnic and linguistic affiliation is determined based on declaration of individuals. According to 2001 census data , 40,0620 people consider themselves to be Yezidi, and 1,519 people - to be Kurdish in Armenia; meanwhile both communities speak the same version of Kurmanji language (the last census was held in Armenia in October 2011, however the results are being processed, and the indicators by nationalities will be published at the end of 2013). The Kurdish have adopted Latin script for their language, meanwhile Yezidis continue to use the Cyrillic script. It should be noted that the leaders, who consider themselves Kurdish, continue to boycott introduction of textbooks in Yezidi language into schools, where Kurdish children study; the issue is that the most part of people, who call themselves Yezidi and Kurdish, live in the same communities and their children go to the same schools. At the same time, due to small number of population in the communities, the total number of children in classes often does not make five to six, and it is not realistic to teach the same language in different classes under the name of two different languages. The authorities of the Republic make efforts on regular basis to solve issues emerging as a result of all that.

14. The Republic of Armenia has announced the following by the decision of the National Assembly on ratification of the Charter, with regard to point 1 of Article 3 of the Charter: "With regard to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages the national minority languages of the Republic of Armenia shall be Assyrian, Yezidi, Greek, Russian and Kurdish". Also, the second report says that when the Government of the Republic of Armenia has undertaken, in particular, the cause of introduction of the Assyrian language as of a national minority language in the education system, some leaders of the ethnic Assyrian community made a statement that they do not accept the concept "national minority language", they instead prefer the expressions "mother tongue" and "national language", and consider Russian to be the mother tongue. However, other representatives of the Assyrians consider Assyrian language to be the mother tongue of the Assyrian community. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages does not specify the national minority language as ethnic, mother tongue or national. Moreover, there is no definition that the mother tongue is ethnic or national language. According to the Charter the regional or minority languages are those, which are traditionally used in the given area of the state by citizens of that state,

who represent a quantitatively smaller group of population, than the rest part of the population of the given state, and are distinguished from the official language (languages) of that state and do not comprise neither the dialects of the official language (languages) of that state, nor the languages of migrants. Under such conditions safeguarding two different minority languages for the same ethnic community - especially in the sphere of education, and, moreover, in case when Assyrians, making statements about different languages, live in the same rural communities, which have only one school, is very difficult. The state fulfils its obligations with regard to those Assyrians, who choose Russian as a "minority language", in Russian, and for those who choose Assyrian as "minority language", in Assyrian. Part of Assyrians has expressed a wish to organise school education of their children in Russian, at the same time ensuring also the teaching of Assyrian.

15. Meanwhile, according to the decision of the republican admissions committee for education admissions existing starting from 2011-2012 academic year - one free of charge student place has been provided from reserve places to both the Assyrian community - for "Pedagogy and methods" specialisation at Armenian State Pedagogic University after Khachatur Abovyan, and to Yezidi community - for "Iranian studies" specialisation in Yerevan State University due to the mediation of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. However, the efforts of the state in the given issue will be efficient only in case when the ethnic minority itself makes a choice in the issue of "minority language". At the same time, citizens of the Republic of Armenia cannot fully integrate into the public without knowing the official language of the country and the state has an obligation to teach its citizens Armenian at proper level. Also, in connection with the necessity to integrate into the international community, foreign, mainly European languages and Russian language, but not only those languages, are studied as mandatory subjects in curricula of general education school. For instance, Assyrian language is studied in number 8 general education school after Alexander Pushkin in Yerevan.
16. The people, who consider the languages protected by Armenia under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, to be their mother tongue, have varying attitude towards use of the mother tongue. For instance, Greek language is not used in practice even by the small ethnic Greek community (1,176 people). The Greek continue



to publish their periodical in Russian or Armenian, because there are no readers in Greek. The elderly people continue to represent a significant part of the Greek community (over one third). It is difficult to ensure the process of development of the Greek language, as of a minority language, under such conditions.

17. The statistic data on knowledge of languages of ethnic communities of the Republic of Armenia and issues connected with that have been submitted in the previous reports. At present, it is also difficult to express in absolute figures the pattern of knowledge of respective mother tongue or minority language by representatives of national minorities or ethnic communities. A part of representatives of national minorities or ethnic communities indicated their ethnic language to be mother tongue during the census, which however does not imply that they master that language. The others indicated the language that they master better as their mother tongue. In particular, part of the Greek and the Assyrians, as well as the significant part of Ukrainians, Polish, Germans, Jews and Belarusians residing in Armenia master the Russian language comparatively better, and part of them indicate Russian language as their mother tongue.
18. Meanwhile, there are very few foreigners in Armenia, who consider Armenian to be their first language; one may come across such people among Yezidis, Greek and Assyrians. It should be noted that a considerable part of Armenians masters the language of the national minority to this or that extent in the communities of Armenia, where citizens of other ethnicities live together with Armenians. Thus, part of Armenians residing in the Assyrian villages of Dimitrov, Verin Dvin can speak Assyrian, and Armenians living in the Amre Taza/Sadunts, Derek, Avshen, Eraskhahun, Zovuni villages with Yezidi population masters Yezidi language to this or that extent. Thus, the issue of identifying the native speakers of a minority language with their ethnic community continues to be topical.
19. The ethnic communities of foreigners residing in the Republic of Armenia, as well as separate individuals, are holders of rights of national minorities. However, implementation of the state assistance, aimed at exercise of rights of national minorities, is complicated due to the above mentioned issues, especially due to their dispersion, and in some cases, due to their small number.

## Part 2

### Practical steps taken at national level, which summarise results of the 2nd stage of monitoring of implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

20. The ECRML (2009)<sup>6</sup> report "On the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: Application of the Charter by Armenia: Second Stage of Observations" of the Committee of Experts on the Charter adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 23 September 2009 and the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has been provided to all stakeholder state bodies for the purposes of discussion and making proposals.
21. The report "On the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: Application of the Charter by Armenia: Second Stage of Observations" of the Committee of Experts on the Charter of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe have been discussed with persons responsible for minority issues of state and regional bodies of Armenia with the purpose of taking practical steps aimed at eliminating shortcomings.
22. The report "On the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: application of the Charter by Armenia: second stage of observations" of the Committee of Experts on the Charter of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe have been provided to NGOs, media outlets of all national minorities operating in the territory of the Republic of Armenia, the Yerevan Office of the Council of Europe, the OSCE Yerevan Office, the Office of the Human Rights Defender. The materials have also been posted on the website of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.
23. The National Commission on Television and Radio (NCTR) ensures principles of freedom, independence and diversity of mass media secured by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia. The NCTR ensures free choice and free production of TV and radio programmes according to law. According to point 1 of Article 4 of the Republic of Armenia "On TV and Radio", "The right for free choice, production and dissemination of

TV and radio programmes is ensured in the Republic of Armenia. Censorship of TV and radio programmes shall be prohibited." The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On TV and Radio" has undergone certain changes in connection with the programmes communicated in national minority languages starting from 2008. At present a working group led by the Human Rights Defender has been established upon assignment of the President of the Republic of Armenia with the purpose of improving the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On TV and Radio".

24. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia has taken practical steps aimed at raising the efficiency of the education process of children from ethnic communities of national minorities, as well as works aimed at organising pre-school education in national minority languages, are being carried out. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia implements programmes aimed at retraining of teachers of languages, history and culture of national minorities and preparing new staff.

### **Part 3**

#### **Measures taken and projects implemented after the second report submitted by the Republic of Armenia aimed at implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages**

25. As mentioned in the second report of the Republic of Armenia, the right for legal equality has been refined with the following amendment of Article 14.1 of Constitution of the Republic of Armenia: "Discrimination based on gender, race, skin colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion, ideology, political or other views, national minority affiliation, property status, origin, disability, age or other circumstances of personal or social nature, shall be prohibited." Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia has been formulated with the following edition: "Everyone shall have the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity". Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language and culture". In 2009 Armenia adopted the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education", which ensures equal opportunities

for, access to, continuity, succession and compliance of the general education to the level of development, peculiarities and level of training of learners. According to point 10 of Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education": "The general education of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia may be organised in their mother tongue or the national language - with mandatory teaching of Armenian language," this ensures the right of national minorities for preserving and developing their language.

26. Armenia adopted the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On the Human Rights Defender", and the staff of the Human Rights Defender was formed afterwards. The defender of the national minority rights has been functioning in the staff of the Human Rights Defender since 2011. "The department for protection of vulnerable groups and cooperation with non-governmental organisations" was established in the staff of the Human Rights Defender in 2012; one of the strategic goals of the department is protection of language rights of national minorities.

27. The department of national minority and religion issues of the staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia was formed in 2004. This structural subdivision of the staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia takes part in the works aimed at development of an action plan for the Government of Armenia, ensures implementation of the action plan, contributes to preservation of traditions of persons belonging to national minorities, performs functions of a body authorised by the Government of the Republic of Armenia ensuring protection of the right of development of language and culture.

28. The department of national minorities and religion issues of the staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia developed, with participation of representatives of national minorities, and submitted for discussion the draft law of the Republic of Armenia "On national and ethnic minorities". However, discussions of the draft law ceded, as the significant part of representatives of national minorities believe that there is no need to adopt a law on national minorities, and that the legal measures of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia are sufficient. As for social issues, usually they are not connected to national belonging and are common for the whole population of the Republic. Moreover, the state seeks to create all conditions for national minorities with the purpose of preserving national values, language and culture.

29. The new Criminal Code has entered into force in the Republic of Armenia in 2003, articles 143, 226, 392 of which also refer to violations of national, racial, religious, linguistic rights or cases of inciting hostility. Article 143 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia envisages punishment for linguistic discrimination. Provided the given elements of crime, abuse of official position is an aggravating circumstance. Article 226 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia also refers to the protection of linguistic rights, as it is aimed at condemnation of acts directed to degrading national dignity. Article 226 of the Code envisages punishment in case of actions aimed at inciting national, racial or religious hostility, racial superiority, or at degrading national dignity. Article 392 of the Criminal Code prescribes punishment for crimes against humanity, which are committed based on racial, national, ethnic affiliation, political views and confession of civilian population.
30. The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On mass media", which entered into force in 2004 in Armenia, does not set forth a mandatory requirement of state registration of mass media, also the Law does not set forth any requirement regarding language of a mass media outlet, which provides greater opportunity to the mass media outlet in the sense of spreading information in the language (languages) chosen by it.
31. The Law of the Republic of Armenia " On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings" adopted by the National Assembly in 2004 provides an opportunity to file an application with administrative bodies of the Republic of Armenia also in the language of a national minority.
32. Financial support from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia to educational and cultural activities of non-governmental organisation of national minorities continues to be provided. Apart from the annual allocation of ten million drams from the state budget, additional ten million drams have been allocated based on the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the purpose of supporting educational and cultural programmes of affiliate organisations of the Coordinating Council in 2012.

## **Part 4**

### **Steps taken – according to articles**

## **Part II:**

### **Goals and principles pursued in compliance with point 1 of Article 2**

#### **Article 7. Objectives and principles**

**“Point 1.**

**In respect of regional or minority languages used in certain areas and in compliance with the status of each language – the sides will base their policy, legislation and practice on the following objectives and principles:**

**a. the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth”**

33. The strategy of the Republic of Armenia related to language policy is built taking into account that the languages of national minorities are an indispensable part of linguistic culture of the Republic of Armenia, and are its cultural wealth. The state care for languages of national minorities is significant for the further course of democratisation of the Republic of Armenia and development of civil society. The languages of national minorities are under state protection and possess special recognition in Armenia. The linguistic right of national minorities is enshrined in Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia. The Republic of Armenia guarantees, by means of Article 1 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Language”, the free use of languages of national minorities in its territories, and Article 4 of the same law defines: “Organisations of national minorities residing in the Republic of Armenia shall formulate their documents, forms, and seals in Armenian - with parallel translation into their language.” Some of the principles of the country’s language policy are the following: respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, encouragement of development of the language and culture of national

minorities. Events organised in the frameworks of language policy are aimed at preservation and development of languages of national minorities, efficient linguistic communication and mutual understanding.

34. As it was mentioned in the previous report, the State Programme on Language Policy was approved by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of 2002, the main provisions of which enshrine: "The precedence of the state language of the Republic of Armenia is harmoniously accompanied by preservation of the languages of national minorities, principles of mutual respect for all cultures – in compliance with international law and language policy norms of the European Council. " Implementation of the programme's events is envisaged for the period of 2002-2005. The following actions were envisaged in the framework of the programme in the sphere of languages of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia:

- Comprehensive assistance to preservation and development of the languages of national minorities,
- Assistance to efficient linguistic communication and mutual understanding between national minorities in compliance with language policy norms of the European Council.
- Involvement of scientific-pedagogic capacity of intelligentsia of the given nationality with the purpose of ensuring the right of national minorities for receiving education in the mother tongue.
- Assistance to the works aimed at preparing and training teachers of national minority languages.
- Analysis of possibilities to create textbooks of national minority languages and development of publishing programme.

The Republic of Armenia supports preservation and development of the languages and culture identity of national minorities residing in the country's territory through implementation of educational-cultural programmes. The right of national minorities to receive education in the mother tongue was enshrined in point 10 of Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On general education" adopted in 2009, according to which: "The general education of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia may be organised "in their mother tongue or national language - with mandatory teaching of Armenian." Various scientific conferences and scientific-

pedagogic conferences on key issues of national minorities have been held in the Republic starting from 2002. The curricula and textbooks of national minority languages are published and republished on regular basis with financial support of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. The National Institute of Education implements training of teachers of national minorities with support of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. The Government of the Republic of Armenia continues to make efforts in the issue of preparing teachers of national minorities, in particular, student seats, envisaged for admission on preferential conditions, are provided to representatives of national minorities in the higher education institutions of the Republic.

35. A number of articles of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On bases of culture-related legislation" refer to the rights and languages of national minorities. According to Article 8 of the Law "The Republic of Armenia shall support preservation and development of the cultural identity of national minorities residing on its territory, shall contribute through state programmes to the creation of conditions for preservation, spread and development of their religion, traditions, language, cultural heritage and culture ". Article 6 of the same law considers cultural value to be the languages, national traditions and customs, geographic names; Article 9 ensures that everyone participates in the cultural life of the Republic of Armenia and carries out culture-related activities irrespective of nationality, race, gender, confession, views, social origin, proprietary or other status.

36. A number of other laws of the Republic of Armenia, which will be referred below, have taken the rights for use of the languages of national minorities under special protection, as well as those laws envisage norms condemning discriminatory attitude towards them.

**"b. the respect of the geographical area of each regional or minority language in order to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority language in question"**



37. Representatives of communities of national minorities residing in the Republic of Armenia populate the country by segments, and in separate settlements they constitute a part of the mixed population or majority of the population. In general, various groups of ethnic communities are distributed in cities, and they mostly live in the cities of Yerevan, Ashtarak, Vanadzor and Abovyan. The absolute majority of other national minorities of the Republic, apart from Assyrians, Yezidis and Kurdish, the majority of whom are rural residents, reside in urban areas. So, only 7,413 out of 40,620 Yezidis of the republic lived in cities, only 315 out of 1,519 Kurdish lived in cities, 524 out of 3,409 Assyrians live in cities and 853 - out of 1,176 Greek; and 10,489 – out of 14,660 Russians as of 2001. Distribution of Armenia's permanent population on the basis of nationalities by cities and villages as of 2001 is attached to this report (Annex1). Mainly Yezidis, Kurdish, Assyrians and a part of Russians live in compact settlements. The list of mixed rural settlements or rural settlements populated predominantly with national minorities is attached to the report (Annex 2). Rya-Taza, Amre-Taza (Sadunts), Mirak, Sangyar (Kaniashir), Shenkani, Alagyaz, Jamshlu, Ortatchya (Mijnatun), Derek (Tchatchkanis), Avshen villages in the list are populated predominantly by Yezidis, there are people of Kurdish ethnic identity. The settlements of Yezidis and Kurdish are situated mainly in Aragatsotn, Armavir, Ararat and Kotayk marzes (regions): Assyrians are dispersed in Ararat, Armavir, and Kotayk marzes; two Russian compact settlements are situated in Lori marz; there is a Greek community in Lori and Shirak marzes. Everything possible was done during administrative and territorial division of the Republic of Armenia so as the ethnic settlements, where the same language is spoken, be situated in the same marz. In particular, the former districts of Aragats, Talin and Ashtarak, where settlements of Yezidis and Kurdish were situated, are combined within the boundaries of the same - Aragatsotn - marz. In general, the territorial and administrative division of the Republic of Armenia does not create any obstacle in the process of development of national minority languages.

38. According to point 21 of Article 16 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On local self-governance" the council of elders of the community has the competence to give or change geographic names. According to point 1 of Article 82 of the Law, the leader of a community shall name and rename streets, avenues, squares, parks of the community and educational, cultural and other establishments and organisations under the

community's jurisdiction. Article 5 of another Law of the Republic of Armenia "On administrative and territorial division" defines the following: " Community comprising of one settlement shall be given the name of that settlement, and a community comprising of two or more settlements shall be given the name of the settlement with a larger population". Consequently, the issue of geographic names in settlements populated with national minorities is in the framework of their own competence.

**"c. the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard protect them"**

39. Apart from publishing curricula, textbooks, preparing pedagogic staff with the purpose of supporting preservation of national minority languages, funds are allocated from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia to non-governmental organisations of ethnic communities in order to encourage the process of printing of periodic press published by them. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia provides support to publication of 13 press outlets and four magazines issued in national minority languages. The Public Radio of Armenia has daily broadcasts in regional or minority languages – Yezidi, Kurdish, Russian and Assyrian. The lack of Greek language is connected with the lack of specialists, however, the management of Public Radio does its best to solve the problem mentioned above this year. Apart from main news programmes, there are also programmes on historical-cultural, ethnographic topics in national minority languages. Along with being broadcast from the platforms of the Public Radio, the programmes are also posted in Internet – at [www.armradio.am](http://www.armradio.am) website. Majority of the laws of the Republic of Armenia have been translated and continue to be translated into Russian. However, some native speakers of the language do not use in full the opportunities, created as a result of the policy carried out by the state and aimed at encouragement of use of national minority languages.

40. National minorities have been carrying out book publishing actively in the past ten years. The Russian ethnic community published books in Russian language - "History of Molokans and Dukhobors" in 2001; "A.S. Griboyedov and Armenia", "Russia and Armenia: 19th century", "Together forever: around historical-cultural and literary Russian-Armenian ties" in 2002, "Russians in the history of Armenia". Collections of

six stories of Kurdish publicist Amarike Sardari have been published, two of which have been translated into Russian. The following books about Yezidis have been published – “Legends of Yezidi Kurds” by Amine Avdal in 2006, “Hajieh Jndi – 100” in 2008, “Participation of Yezidi people in Karabakh war” authored by Aziz Tamoyan and Hasan Tamoyan. The Jewish community published “Jews in Armenia” book in 2009 and 2010; the German community published “German pages in the history of Russia and South Caucasus” by V. Vuxrer and N. Algulyan , “In order to please the day” books in 2009. “Classic Assyrian” work of A Hakobyan, which is the first Armenian-language textbook devoted to one of the oldest languages in the Middle East, has been published. A new programme entitled “ Publication of literature of national minorities” has been launched in the Republic starting from 2008. In particular, “Literary almanac of creative people of national minorities”, in which creative people of national minorities are presented. Poems of Mame Alikhane, “Our village” by Amarike Sardari and stories by Samand Sima were published in Kurdish in 2008-2011; “Selection” by Smo Shamoyan, Ahmade Khan - translation from Kurdish; “Mam and Zin” by Ch. Rash-Mstoyan, “Collection of poems” by Yuriy Aleksandrov books; books by a groups of authors “Collection” (literature of national minorities), books of Jewish community of Armenia; “The 10th anniversary of the council coordinating national cultural organisations of national minorities” catalogue.

41. About 450 books in Greek, 686 books in Kurdish and several thousands of books in Russian are kept and used in the National Library of the Republic of Armenia. There are large quantities of literature in those languages also in other libraries of the Republic, and in Russian – also in school libraries. There is a considerable volume of literature both in languages of national minorities taken under protection by the Republic of Armenia, and in other languages of ethnic communities- Georgian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, German, and Polish – in the libraries of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia and respective scientific-research institutes and education institutions. Anyone who wants can freely use the above mentioned literature.
42. Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Language” enshrines the right of national minority organisations to formulate their documents, forms and seals in their language, which is one of measures aimed at supporting and developing the written language of national minorities.

43. The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings" also contribute to preservation and development of national minority languages; Article 27 of the law defines: "Persons mastering languages of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, as prescribed by law or in compliance with international treaties of the Republic of Armenia, can file the application for implementation of the administrative procedure and the documents attached to it in the language of the respective minority. According to the same article of the Law, participants of the administrative proceedings shall be allowed to use foreign languages, meanwhile only in case the administrative body does not have a possibility to provide respective interpretation, the participant of the proceedings, who masters the foreign language, shall be obliged to provide interpretation. According to Article 59 of the Law, the participant of the procedure may be provided with the copy of the administrative act translated into the foreign language, which must be certified with the official seal of respective administrative body. Article 93 of the Law defines: the costs connected with hiring interpreters during administrative proceedings shall be covered by the body carrying out the administrative proceedings and only in case when an interpreter was invited by the participant of the proceedings, respective costs shall be incurred by the latter.
44. The Centre of Culture of Nationalities, created and furnished by the Government of the Republic of Armenia with the purpose of developing cultures of national minorities, provides all opportunities for study, use and development of national minority languages. All ethnic communities of Armenia have a possibility to make use of those premises.
45. According to the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Advertisement", the language of the advertisement in Armenia is Armenian; however, the statement of the advertiser may also be accompanied by the statement in other languages – in comparatively smaller letters. The restrictions refer only to the volume of advertisement made in different languages - the statement of advertisement in Armenian language shall not be smaller in its scale than the version published in another language.

**"d/ The facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and in writing, in public and private life"**

46. Steps to facilitate the use of national minority languages in writing were mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. For the purpose of facilitating the spoken language, various events are organised in respective languages. In 2008, in the event of the International Day for Protection of Children an event was organised, in the course of which children of national minority representatives performed their art, songs and dances. During 2008-2014 musical festivals of national minorities were organised with the participation of all the community representatives of national minorities. The festival was traditionally held in Yerevan, however, in recent years it has been held in marzes of the Republic of Armenia in the places of residence of ethnic communities of national minorities.

47. Since 2008 a new programme namely "Organisation of Visits to the Monuments of National Minorities of the Republic of Armenia and Creation of a Video Film" has been implemented with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, the purpose whereof is not only to show the cultural heritage to the public, but it also has scientific and educational nature. The latter plays an important role in ensuring that the languages mentioned are used more actively at least for cultural if not for social purposes, as well as creates opportunities for the younger generation to have contact with their national language. As most of the choirs include families with mixed marriages or simply Armenians, the use of language extends beyond the framework of ethnic community. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia provides assistance for such communities' cultural activities. Every year budget allocations are envisaged in the annual and medium term expenditure programmes of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia for the purpose of supporting cultural events of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. Minister of Culture of the Republic of Armenia granted a special prize "To the musical festival for the best new sport and cultural project in 2008 " for the musical festival of national minorities organised in 2008 in city Akhtala of Lori marz of the Republic of Armenia.

**e/the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using a regional or minority language and other groups in the State employing a language used in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages**

48. Point 9 under the title "Cooperation with National Minorities Residing in the Territory of Armenia" of part "Culture" of the 2008-2012 programme of measures of the Government of the Republic of Armenia is aimed at preserving the cultural identity of national minorities and involving the cultural framework of Armenia through supporting the publication of non-state press and literature, organisation of festivals in the national minority languages, reconstruction of ethnic communities' monuments and development of modern art.

49. Since 2008 the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia has launched a new programme - production of film series for the purpose of ensuring the recognition of historical and modern monuments of national minorities. In 2010, events devoted to the 10-th anniversary of the Coordinating Council for National and Cultural Organisations representing National Minorities of the Republic of Armenia were held by the Staff of President of the Republic of Armenia and Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia. In 2008 the programme "Variety Rainbow of Nationalities of Armenia" and intercultural youth festival "Dialogue of Cultures" were held with the support of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. At the same time all this contributes to the preservation and development of links, effective language communication and mutual understanding between national minorities.

50. Generally, in the Republic of Armenia there are over 50 non-governmental organisations representing 11 ethnic communities, certain part of the activities whereof is directed also to the preservation and development of mother tongues. Besides those representing Assyrian, Yezidi, Russian, Greek, Kurdish ethnic communities, an active role is played by non-governmental organisations representing Ukrainian, Jewish,

Polish, Georgian, Belarusian and German ethnic communities. In Armenia there are unions, associations of non-governmental organisations representing national minorities, which unite non-governmental organisations representing different ethnic communities.

51. Adjacent to the Adviser to the President of the Republic of Armenia there is a Council coordinating national and cultural non-governmental organisations representing national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. The Council was established upon the initiative of the representatives of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia during the conference of national and cultural organisations representing national minorities of the Republic of Armenia held in March of 2000 with a view to coordinate the activities of national and cultural organisations. On 15 June 2000 President of the Republic of Armenia through his executive order approved the establishment during the conference of national and cultural unions representing national minorities of Armenia of the Council adjacent to the Adviser to the President of the Republic of Armenia, which coordinates national and cultural non-governmental unions representing national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. The Council is an advisory body, encompasses 22 members elected by the rotation principle through the nomination of two representatives once every two years during the general meeting of organisations having led their national and cultural activities for at least five years (starting from the date of state registration), and represent each community of 11 national minorities present in the Republic of Armenia. The Coordinating Council was established to ensure the protection of national minorities, make intercommunity relations more active and ensure that the Government deals more efficiently with specific cultural, educational, legal and other issues.
52. In 2006 the Cultural Centre of Nationalities was furnished, equipped technically and put into operation by an immediate intervention of the President of the Republic of Armenia. In the given Centre national minorities have the opportunity to organise Sunday classes, meetings, celebrate their national holidays, hold different events. Since 2007 there is an Assyrian music production and recording studio in the Cultural Centre for National Minorities, where the recording and production of songs in other languages take place.

53. All the ethnic communities are involved in two annual events: the “Exhibition of National Minorities’ Fine, Decorative and Applied Art ” and “Musical Festival for Children of National Minorities” traditionally organised by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia for the national minorities. The programmes are widely covered and commented on by mass media.

54. Thus, as long as there are Cultural Centre for National Minorities, actively operating Subcommittee of National Minorities of the Community Council, unions, associations of national minorities’ non-governmental organisations, and joint cultural festivals and exhibitions are held, the cooperation of all the national communities of the Republic, the preservation and development of links between them have become easier and far more effective.

**“f/ the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages”**

55. Educational programmes coordinated in languages of most of national minorities are impossible to implement either because of the small number of the language speakers, or as a result of their separate residence in the Republic of Armenia, as well as because of small demand or the absence thereof towards some languages. According to the results of the population census conducted in 2001, the total number of people belonging to national minorities is 67.657. The majority of them — 40.620 people or around 60 percent of the total number of non-Armenian citizens — are Yezidis, the other national minorities altogether account for a total of about 40 percent. National breakdown of the population of the Republic of Armenia according to the population census of 2001 is shown in the table below.



<b>Totally people</b>	<b>Armenian</b>	<b>Yezidi</b>	<b>Russian</b>	<b>Assyrian</b>	<b>Kurdish</b>	<b>Jewish</b>	<b>Other</b>
3213011	3145354	40620	14660	3409	1519	1176	6273

Most of the national minority languages are, nevertheless, taught in various ways in educational institutions of different levels. For example, for the purpose of ensuring pre-school education for children of representatives of national minorities and of Russian servicemen due to the State efforts there is a Russian club in the kinder garden N 4 of Gyumri in marz Shirak.

56. All the necessary conditions were created by the Ministry of Education and Science at the elementary, basic and higher levels of general schools for the organisation of continuous education for children of national minorities. Due to the efforts and detailed work of the National Institute of Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia necessary curriculum, programmes have been prepared, textbooks, as well as supplementary literature have been published for the purpose of ensuring complete education in general education schools of national minorities

57. Every year a "Sample curriculum for the General School (class) Education of National Minorities" is drafted and introduced by the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, in accordance to which, by 2011-2012, 39 hours per week were allocated to for the study of the mother tongue and literature in years 1 to 11, while now the abovementioned number of hours related to the introduction of programmes for the 12-th year has increased up to 41. In 2009 the criteria and programme of the Assyrian and Kurdish languages for years 1 to 12 have been examined and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia.

58. No demand for the obtainment of professional /handicraft/ and secondary vocational education has been submitted so far by the communities of national minorities. The evidence for that is the fact that years ago departments for obtaining specialty of a pedagogue of Yezidi and Kurdish languages were opened at Bakunts Yerevan State Pedagogical College, but were later closed because of the lack of applicants.

59. Since 2007 upon the nomination by organisations introduced to the Council adjacent to the Adviser to the President of the Republic of Armenia coordinating national and cultural non-governmental organisations representing national minorities of the Republic of Armenia and through the intervention of Staff of President of the Republic of Armenia, every academic year non-competitive admission places have been allocated for the representatives of Yezidi, Kurdish and Assyrian communities to study in the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University. Since 2010, representatives of other national minorities nominated by the organisations representing relevant communities in the Council have also obtained the opportunity to make use of these privileges, upon expressing their wish to study in the departments of higher education institutions related to culture and language with the purpose of developing national culture and language. Later on through the intervention of the Council, higher educational institutions award these students with full or partial scholarships to cover their tuition fees. In 2010-2012 academic year one representative from each of the Yezidi and Kurdish communities studying in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Yerevan State University, as well as one representative of the Jewish community studying at Yerevan State Conservatory benefited from the mentioned opportunity.
60. Besides, financial support is provided by the Armenian Youth Foundation for the implementation of study for the Yezidi students, as well as of the cultural programmes offered by the youth organisations representing the Yezidi community. Since 2011-2012 academic year upon the decision of the Republic Admission Board for admission to full time courses, one free admission place out of the reserved places has been allocated to each of the Assyrian and Yezidi communities; for the Assyrian community at Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan with the specialisation of "Pedagogy and Methodology", and for the Yezidi community at Yerevan State University with the specialisation of "Iranian Studies".
61. For the purpose of ensuring the teaching and study of national minority languages at all appropriate stages the Republic of Armenia implements continuing programmes, which contribute to the effective organisation of the education for the national minorities. The steps taken, however, would be effective only in case the representatives of national minorities express their wish to benefit from the existing opportunities.

**“g/ the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire”**

62. As mentioned in the introductory part of the Report Armenia does not have the problem of regional languages and, accordingly, when ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Republic of Armenia undertook to develop a policy and define an Action Plan for the protection and development only of the national minority languages.

63. Russian is taught in all the educational institutions of the Republic, in some of the institutions Assyrian and Jewish languages are also taught. Ethnic communities create the necessary conditions, such as the organisation of out of school classes, Sunday classes and different educational and cultural events in the places of residence of those wishing to learn the languages of national minorities of the Republic.

**“h/ the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities and equivalent institutions”**

64. Out of the national minority languages Russian and Greek are studied at different higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia. For example, Russian and Greek are included in the list of more than 10 foreign languages taught at Yerevan State

Linguistic University after V. Bryusov. In higher education institutions there are specialised linguistic departments, where the studies are conducted.

**“i/The promotion of appropriate types of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter for regional or minority languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States”.**

65. Ethnic communities of the Republic of Armenia have full range of opportunities to maintain contact with the speakers of the languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States. Provisions are enshrined in the agreements on friendship and cooperation signed by the Republic of Armenia with other states, regarding the establishment of the necessary conditions for the preservation and development of the ethnic, cultural and religious identity of national minorities residing respectively in the two countries and the implementation of appropriate measures. Examples of such provisions are to be found in Article 8 of the Treaty of friendship and cooperation concluded with the Russian Federation, Article 20 of the Treaty with Greece, Article 14 of the Treaty with Romania, Article 9 of the Treaty with Bulgaria, Article 5 of the Treaty with Kazakhstan, Article 8 of the Treaty with Lebanon, Articles 5 and 6 of the Treaty with Ukraine. There are numerous exchange visits, discussions and joint events that take place on different occasions between the representatives of ethnic communities of Armenia and the given states. For example, pupils and students go abroad to study at specialised educational institutions or to spend holidays in camps of their ethnic motherland. Besides, most of the representatives of the Armenian ethnic communities are involved in the works of International organisations, and those of the Cooperation of Independent States.

**"Point 2.**

**The Parties undertake to eliminate, if they have not yet done so, any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of a regional or minority language and intended to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of it. The adoption of special measures in favour of regional or minority languages aimed at promoting equality between the users of these languages and the rest of the population or which take due account of their specific conditions is not considered to be an act of discrimination against the users of more widely-used languages."**

66. As it was presented in the second report, Article 14.1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia inter alia other features as gender, race, colour of skin, ethnic or social origin and other, also separately states the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of the language or membership to a national minority. Article 41 of the Constitution states that "Everyone shall have the right to preserve his or her national and ethnic identity. Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language and culture".

67. In addition to the constitutional guarantees, the free use of their native languages by the national minorities is also protected by a number of other laws. According to Article 1 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Language" the Republic of Armenia shall guarantee on its territory the free use of languages of national minorities. Article 4 of the Law states "Organisations of national minorities living on the territory of the Republic of Armenia shall design their documents, letterheads, seals in the Armenian language accompanied by the translation into their native language". The protection of the linguistic rights of national minorities is also guaranteed by a number of Articles of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On the fundamentals of cultural legislation". According to Article 8 of the Law "The Republic of Armenia shall support maintenance and development of the cultural identity of national minorities residing on its territory, shall contribute through state programmes to the creation of conditions for maintenance, spread and development of their religion, traditions, language, cultural heritage". Article 9 of the same Law guarantees for everyone the participation in the

cultural life in the Republic of Armenia and involvement in the cultural activities irrespective of nationality, race, gender, language, religion, belief, social origin, property or other condition; according to Article 6 languages, national traditions and customs, geographical names are also considered cultural value. According to Article 8(b) of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Advertising" "An advertisement shall be banned if it contains insulting expressions, comparisons and images with regard to race, nationality, profession or social origin, age group or sex, language, religious or other beliefs..." The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings" provides an opportunity to file applications with the administrative bodies of the Republic of Armenia also in the languages of national minorities. According to Article 143 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia direct or indirect breach of human and civil rights and freedoms on grounds of nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political or other views, social origin, property or other status, if such a violation caused damage to the lawful interests of a person is criminally prosecuted.

68. According to Article 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia "International treaties are an integral part of the legal system of the Republic of Armenia. If ratified international treaties define norms other than those provided for by laws, such norms shall apply." Hence, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as an integral part of the legal system of the Republic of Armenia applies on the territory of the Republic of Armenia as a mechanism for protection of languages.

**Point 3.**

**"Parties undertake to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between all linguistic groups of the country and, in particular, the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages among the objectives of education and training provided within their countries and encouragement of mass media to pursue the same objective"**

69. The general education programmes approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia include topics on human rights, racial discrimination, history and culture of the national minorities, and the textbooks include relevant materials. The standard and curriculum of the subject "Sociology" of the general public school of the Republic include "The rights of national minorities" and "Tolerance" topics.

70. According to Article 26 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Television and Radio", the Public TV and Radio Company is obliged to provide programme series and programmes to the television and radio audience, where the interests of national minorities, different layers and social groups of the society of Armenia are taken into account. Article 22 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Television and Radio" the use of television and radio for disseminating national, racial and religious hostility or division is prohibited. The public TV and radio regularly broadcast programmes about ethnic communities of Armenia dedicated to their history, education, culture, language, rights. It is worth mentioning that there is no mass media in the Republic of Armenia which would disseminate negative stereotypes on ethnic minorities.

71. With the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia the periodicals issued in the Republic in the languages of national minorities regularly present news on the educational, social, cultural life of national minorities. The information and analytical materials on the events of ethnic communities contribute to the creation of an environment of respect and mutual understanding among all linguistic groups of the country.

72. The Public Radio of the Republic of Armenia broadcasts radio programmes in the languages of national minorities every day. The programmes are prepared by the active participation of ethnic communities and present political, economic and cultural developments of Armenia, as well as events in different ethnic communities of Armenia.

**Point 4.**

**"In determining their policy with regard to regional or minority languages, the**

**Parties shall take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages. They are encouraged to establish bodies, if necessary, for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to regional or minority languages”**

73. The draft programmes and decisions relating to ethnic communities of Armenia are discussed with the representatives of the national minorities. The drafts are discussed in the Co-ordinating Council of national-cultural organisations of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia under the Advisor to the President of the Republic of Armenia. The activities of the Council are carried out in accordance with the rules of procedure approved by the Council in its sessions, which are convened twice a month, if necessary also through extraordinary meetings, whereas the meetings of separate representatives of national minorities with the authorities are organised more frequently based on the urgency and importance of the issues put forward by them. The main functions of the Council are the following:

- support and protection of the rights and freedoms of the national minorities;
- development of recommendations on the issues relating to the rights of national minorities;
- discussions, analysis and development of recommendations of draft legal acts relating to the rights and freedoms of national minorities;
- discussion of issues relating to educational-cultural programmes of national minorities;
- discussion of current issues presented by the members of the Council.

The Council during its sessions discusses the international documents ratified by the Republic of Armenia, about which the members of the Council inform the wide community of national minorities. Since 2000, by the recommendation of the Council 10 million Armenian Drams are allocated annually by the Government of the Republic of Armenia to contribute to the educational and cultural activities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, which is distributed according to the resolution of the session of the Council adopted by the majority of votes of members. The resolutions on the allocation of finances has generally remained unchanged since



2000: 9 million AMD from 10 million AMD allocated by the state budget is equally distributed to 11 communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia through organisations represented in the Council, and 1 million AMD has been provided for the organisation of unified events and for the implementation of interesting programmes presented by the organisations presenting separate communities in the discussions of the Council. The list of unified events and presented programmes are also discussed and approved in the session of the Council. The session of the Council held on 19 January 2012 again approved the above mentioned procedure for distribution of 10 million AMD. The chairmen of the Council in the recent years with relevant justifications have referred to the Government of the Republic of Armenia with the request to increase the amount. Apart from the annual allocation of AMD 10 million from the state budget, additional 10 million drams have been allocated for the purpose of supporting educational and cultural programmes of member organisations of the Co-ordinating Council in 2012 based on decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. It is worth mentioning that in addition to the amount envisaged by the state budget for the national minorities, the national minorities residing in Armenia without a state of their own received and regularly receive additional financial support from the Staff of the President of the Republic of Armenia. Financial support is also provided to the organisations representing other national minorities for the settlement of national educational and cultural issues that are of more significance to their communities.

**“Point 5.**

**The Parties undertake to apply, mutatis mutandis, the principles listed in points 1 to 4 above to non-territorial languages. However, as far as these languages are concerned, the nature and scope of the measures to be taken to give effect to this Charter shall be determined in a flexible manner, bearing in mind the needs and wishes, and respecting the traditions and characteristics, of the groups which use the languages concerned”.**

74. The definition of the concept “non-territorial languages” in the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages is the languages used by nationals of the State which differ from the language or languages used by the rest of the State's population but

which, although traditionally used within the territory of the State, cannot be identified with a particular area thereof”.

75. The Council co-ordinating national and cultural organisations of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia operating adjacent to the Advisor to the President of the Republic of Armenia has 22 members, which are elected on the rotation basis from the representatives of each community of existing 11 national minorities in the Republic of Armenia. Besides Assyrian, Yezidi, Russian, Greek, Kurdish ethnic communities there are also Ukrainian, Jewish, Polish, Georgian, Belarusian, German ethnic community organisations actively functioning in the Republic of Armenia. The composition of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia is presented in the tables:

<b>Russian</b>	<b>Yezidi</b>	<b>Assyrian</b>	<b>Kurdish</b>	<b>Greek</b>
14660	40620	3409	1519	1176

<b>Ukrainian</b>	<b>Belarusian</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>Jewish</b>	<b>Polish</b>
1633	257	133	109	97

As the tables show the ethnic minorities of Armenia are only six, the number of representatives of which is over one thousand, their number mainly ranges from 100-300 /in the 2001 census there is no separate statistics on the number of Georgians/. In addition to low number of population of some ethnic communities, it should be mentioned that during the recent twenty years due to the activation of relations with their ethnic communities the majority of non-Armenian population have migrated and the gender-age composition of the vast part of the current ethnic communities in Armenia is not proportionate - the majority are elders and women. Meanwhile, significant part of them is distributed in the marzes of the Republic, it lives in an incompact state, which significantly complicates the issue of organising activities aimed at education and culture of separate groups. However, most of those languages in this or that way and extent are taught in educational institutions of different levels. German is taught in a

number of schools in the Republic of Armenia including in the towns and villages. As a profession it is included in the list of professions of Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov, Slavonic University and State Pedagogical University of Gyumri. Various books in Ukrainian, German, Polish, Georgian, Belarusian are stored and used in the National Library of the Republic of Armenia

76. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia within the framework of "State support to non-state press" provides support for the publication of press and journals in the languages of national minorities. The Ukrainian, Jewish, Polish, Georgian ethnic communities of Armenia have regularly published press, and the Polish community also publishes a journal. This includes "Magen Davit" ("Davit's shield") official newspaper published by Jewish community, "Dnipro-Slavutich" newspaper of Ukrainian community, "Poka mi zhivi" newspaper and journal of Polish community, "Iveria" newspaper of Georgian community.

77. With the support of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, the representatives of "Iveria" Georgian community of Armenia have participated in the event "Patriotic camp" in Georgia and in a cross-cultural dialogue dedicated to Armenian-Georgian youth conference. The Polish, Ukrainian, Georgian, Belarusian communities have artistic groups - choirs performing in national languages, folk dance ensembles, which together with the ethnic communities of national minorities, the languages of which are protected by the Charter regularly participate in various festivals in different marzes of Armenia and Yerevan performing songs in national languages. A dozen of events organised annually by Ukrainian ethnic community are accompanied by the concerts of Ukrainian famous "Dnipro", child "Zvonocek" and "Verbichenka" choirs. Likewise, the auditorium is often presented by "Gvyazdechka" song and dance ensemble of the Polish community and "Iveria" artistic group of the Georgian community. Jewish national holidays are celebrated every year, which are accompanied by the theatrical performances on the historical past of Jewish. This initiative of non-governmental organisations contributes to the activation of public and cultural use of the mentioned languages, as well as dealing with the native language by the young generation.

78. In 2008-2011 in the Republic 4 applied fine and decorative art exhibitions of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia were held, where artists from 11 communities

participated. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia in 2011 provided support to "Menora" Jewish cultural centre for compilation of composer W. Weiner's works and to "Yerevan Belarusian Community "Belarus" NGO for organising "Belarusian zorka" festival.

79. It is worth mentioning that the majority of the representatives of the above-mentioned national minorities of Armenia use their ethnic languages very rarely or they do not use them at all. The significant part of the Ukrainians, Polish, Jewish, Belarusians, Germans, Georgians came to Armenia as a result of mixed marriages or labour migration.

80. The number of speakers of non-territorial languages in Armenia has never been significant, they have lived dispersed from each other, have not been much in contact with each other. In all cases, the wishes of the representatives of ethnic communities with regard to their ethnic languages are respected in the Republic of Armenia. The Republic of Armenia builds its language policy on the principles of supporting to preserve and develop the languages, of ensuring an environment of love and respect for the languages.

### **Part III.**

**Measures to promote the use of regional or minority languages in public life in accordance with the obligations entered into under point 2 of Article 2**

#### **Article 8. Education**

**"1. With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State**

- a/** i. to make available pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages;  
or
- ii. to make available a substantial part of pre-school education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
- iii. to apply one of the measures provided for under i and ii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient; or
- iv. if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of pre-school education, to favour and/or encourage the application of the measures referred to under i to iii above;**

81. Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On pre-school education" the implementation of state policy in the field of pre-school education is secured by the local self-government bodies. The organisation of activities of pre-school institutions is directly dependent upon the financing opportunities of the local self-government bodies. The Strategic Programme for 2008- 2015 Reforms in Pre- school Education was approved by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia in 2008. The programme specially focuses on expanding the network of kindergartens on the territories populated by the representatives of national minorities.

82. The Republic of Armenia always provides support to the communities of national minorities, the native languages of which are protected by the Republic of Armenia for organising the pre-school education in relevant languages. Thus, if the number of children in the groups in pre-school institutions is 25-30, then the groups of children with national minorities may function in case 8 to 10 children are admitted.

83. Within the framework of "Increased access to pre-school education" programme included in the list of priorities of 2010 of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, pre-school education micro-programmes have been introduced, as well as renovation, fining and furnishing activities have been carried out in the general education

institutions in the communities in Ararat marz of the Republic of Armenia, including in the kindergarten in Dimitrov community and at school in Verin Dvin community. The investment expenses for micro-programmes have been formed from the loans, whereas the current expenses - from the investments of the communities. Favourable conditions have been created for organising the pre-school education of children and preparing them for school. The institutions simultaneously have been provided with relevant curriculum and methodological literature and educational and methodological materials, technical means. Pedagogical and administrative staff of kindergarten has been provided training by the National Institute of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and by "Step by Step " Benevolent Foundation with the support of UNICEF.

84. With the view to meet the requirements of "Strategic Programme for 2008- 2015 Reforms in Pre- school Education", within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding concluded between the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and "Save the Children Federation inc." international organisation, in 2010-2011 one pre-school room in each school operating in Geghamasar, Arpunk, Pokr Masrik communities populated with Yezidis in Gegharkunik marz have been renovated and furnished under the Project "Improvement of living conditions and social support" to organise the pre-school education for 50 children aged 4-5 years.
85. Pre-school education centres have been established in the school buildings in a number of rural communities of Armenia, where there are classes for the children of 4-5 years of national minorities in the first half of the day. There are such pre-school education centres in a number of general education schools in Shirak, Aragatsotn, Armavir and Ararat marzes of the Republic of Armenia.
86. Within the framework of the programme implemented by Ararat marzpetaran by the funds allocated by the Government of the Republic of Armenia, renovation works were performed in the secondary school of Verin Dvin village in 2010-2011, which offers pre-school education.
87. The issue of pre-school education of Yezidi and Kurdish children residing in Armenia is regularly discussed with local self-government bodies of relevant regions, but the

number of children of pre-school age in some communities is so small that pre-school education for them is very hard to organise.

88. The urban community of Gyumri in Shirak marz of the Republic of Armenia has undertaken measures to organise the education of national minorities in their native language. Upon the permission of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia there is a Russian group in kindergarten No 4 in Gyumri.

89. The other form of support for pre-school education of children of national minorities is that upon the consent or by their choice of the parents or their legal representatives in each kindergarten of the Republic, the education of languages of national minorities may be organised by additional education programmes.

**“b.**

- i.** to make available primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
- ii.** to make available a substantial part of primary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
- iii.** to provide, within primary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum; or
- iv. to apply one of the measures provided for under i to iii above at least to those pupils whose families so request and whose number is considered sufficient”**

90. According to Article 1 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On language” the Republic of Armenia guarantees the free use of languages of national minorities on its territory. Article 2 of the same Law states that in communities of national minorities in the Republic of Armenia the general education and bringing up may be organised in their native language in accordance with the state programme and under the state patronage and compulsory teaching of Armenian language. According to Article 4(10) of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On general education” general education of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia may be organised in their native or national language, by compulsory teaching of Armenian language.

91. Elementary education in ethnic language is available for the national minorities, the languages of which are protected by the Republic of Armenia. The National Institute of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia has elaborated "Curriculum of general education school (class) of national minorities", according to which 4 hours weekly are allocated to teaching the subject "Mother tongue and literature" to the national minorities included in the list of educational subjects of the state component.
92. Within the framework of elementary education teaching of languages of national minorities is ensured as an integral part of educational programme and their teaching is organised even in case of insufficient number of students. In rural villages in the regions populated by Yezidis and Kurds the teaching of Yezidi and Kurdish languages in elementary schools is carried out in case of availability of a relevant specialist irrespective of the number of children /Annex 3/. Teaching of Assyrian language in elementary classes is carried out in elementary classes of secondary schools in Verin Dvin, Dimitrov, Arzni, Nor Artagers villages, Yerevan main school No 8 after Pushkin and high school No 29 after A. Margaryan even for 2-3 children /Annex 4/.
93. With the efforts of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia "Zmane de" alphabet of Kurdish language was issued in 2002 under the authorship of president of Kurdish department of Writers' Union of Armenia Karlene Chachani, which was a significant event for the Kurdish community. By the finances of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia "Alphabet" of Kurdish language was published in 2010, and in 2011 the textbooks of Kurdish 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> classes underwent expertise and are ready to be published.
94. By financing of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia in 2005-2006 textbooks of elementary classes "Yezidi language and literature" were published, in 2010 the textbook "Yezidi -1" was republished and in 2011 "Yezidi-2".
95. In 2009 the National Institute of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia presented the standard and programme of 1-12 grades of Assyrian, which after undergoing expertise, have been approved. By the financing of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia in 2009 the textbook for the first grade "Speak Assyrian" and book-notebook for the second grade "Write and Speak



Assyrian" was published, and in 2011 "Speak Assyrian" textbook for the first grade was republished. With the view to developing the elementary education in Assyrian the authors of the textbooks were offered to draft relevant educational materials.

96. Within the framework of elementary education the education of Greek language since 1996 in Armenia with the support and finances of Embassy of Greece has been carried out in main school N 74 of Yerevan as a mandatory subject, and in schools No 12 and No 132 upon one's will in the school component. The union of Greek public organisation conducts Sunday classes of Greek language in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Alaverdi, Stepanavan and in village Koghes.
97. "According to the curriculum of main general education schools of the Republic of Armenia the subject "Russian language" in grades from 2 to 9 is included in the list of educational subjects of the state component. The education is carried out by the textbooks published in Armenia, where the peculiarities of Russian language education are considered in national school. By the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia in 1999 classes with profound teaching of Russian language are opened. Special programmes, textbooks and methodological manuals have been approved and published.
98. With the view to completely organise the elementary education of children of Yezidi and Kurdish communities, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia carries out activities to replenish the staff of specialists of Yezidi and Kurdish languages. However, the efforts of the state in this respect will be effective only in case, if the representatives of Yezidi and Kurdish communities, with the view to receive relevant education, apply to higher education institutions of Armenia to benefit from gratuitous education opportunities.

«C/ i. to make available secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or

ii. to make available a substantial part of secondary education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or

iii. to provide, within secondary education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum; or

**iv. to apply one of the measures provided for under I to iii above at least to those pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, so wish in a number considered sufficient”**

99. The representatives of communities using the languages of national minorities under the protection of the Republic of Armenia have access to secondary education in the relevant languages. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, within secondary education, provides for the teaching of the relevant language as an integral part of the curriculum for pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, have submitted such an application in a number considered sufficient. The average density of the classroom of a general education school is set for 25-30 learners at the elementary and secondary levels, and 20-25 learners for the total flow of high school. By the decision of the collegial management authority (council) of a general education institution, in separate cases, for instance, with the view to teaching languages protected by the Charter, a classroom with a density less than the established density may be opened at the expense of additional funding of the educational institution. It should be mentioned that in some schools of the city and the villages, teaching in the languages of national minorities is implemented at the expense of state funds in the case of insufficient number of children as well, without the condition of additional funding.

100. The Yezidi and Kurdish languages are taught at secondary schools in the Armavir, Ararat and Aragatsotn Marzes (regions) of the Republic (Appendix 3).

101. In Armenia teaching of the Assyrian language within secondary education is implemented at secondary schools in the Ararat, Kotayk and Armavir Marzes (Appendix 4).
102. Since 1996, upon pupils' desires, teaching of the Greek language is implemented at secondary schools N 74, N 12 and N 132 in Yerevan with the support of the Embassy of Greece in Armenia within the school component.
103. Teaching in the Russian language through the complete general education curriculum is only implemented at one state general education institution, that is, the secondary school in Fioletovo village and the two "Mesrob Mashtots" and "Slavyanskaya" private schools in Yerevan. There are classes taught in the Russian language at 42 general education schools in the Marzes of the Republic and in Yerevan (out of 42 schools, 18 are in Yerevan, 24 are in the Marzes of the Republic) (Table 5). From the above mentioned state general education institutions, 16 are high schools.
104. General education schools periodically organise different events (contests and festivals) with the support of the Embassy of Russian Federation. Russian language is also included in the list of subjects of annual Olympiads for schoolchildren in the school, city, regional and republican stages in the Republic. Schoolchildren of Armenia participate in the Russian language distance Olympiad, and there are already three winners from Yerevan, Kapan and Sisyan.
105. Access to teaching of the languages of national minorities in higher classes of secondary education is provided in case of Russian, Assyrian and Greek languages, and with certain limitations in case of the Kurds and the Yezidi. The problem is the following: General education is mandatory in the Republic of Armenia. Schools are basic in certain rural residences of the Kurds and the Yezidi due to the highly insufficient number of children in the higher classes. If parents decide that their children will continue their education, then the children can receive their education in the schools of nearby residences. However, most parents interrupt their children's education at the level of mandatory education, sometimes even in the residences, where the schools have higher classes.
106. The list of subjects of the state component in the lesson plan of the General Education School (Classroom) for National Minorities developed by the National Institute of

Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia includes the subject "Native Language and Literature" for national minorities, the teaching of which is 3-4 hours a week for each class at the secondary and high levels.

107. After an expert examination in 2009, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia confirmed the standard and curriculum of Kurdish language and literature for the 1st to 12th grades. The "Yezidi-6", "Yezidi-7" and "Yezidi-8" textbooks were published after an expert examination funded by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia in 2009; the "Yezidi-9" textbook has undergone an expert examination and is ready for publication. Starting in 2012, it is envisaged to republish the Yezidi and Assyrian language textbooks through funding provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia.

108. With the view to providing secondary schools with pedagogic staff, teachers of the Yezidi, Kurdish and Assyrian languages are being prepared and trained. In 2009, the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia organised training courses for 10 teachers of Yezidi nationality. The National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian language centre of the "Rossotrudnichestvo" Agency of the Russian Federation of the Humanitarian Cooperation of CIS countries in Armenia always organise training courses and seminar-consultations for Russian language teachers. At the request of representatives of national minorities in the Republic of Armenia, the National Institute of Education has organised Armenian language teaching courses for 20 representatives of national minorities.

109. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia is ready to support the Kurdish community, as well as the communities of other national minorities in solving the issue relating to staff, if the representatives of the community express the desire to obtain a relevant profession. Applicants take entrance exams at testing centres to get accepted to higher education institutions in the Republic of Armenia. The entrance exams are organised by the Assessment and Testing Centre established by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia in 2004. In addition to the previous report, we inform the following regarding the entrance exams for applicants who have received education in Russian language:

110. In accordance with the lesson plan of the secondary general education school (class) with Russian language instruction, the subjects "Armenian Language" and "Armenian Literature" are set for 2-6 hours a week for each class of the secondary school, according to the list of subjects of the state component. Consequently, the learner graduating from school must have rather good command of Armenian language. Moreover, in accordance with the procedure established by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, if the graduating student has studied "Armenian Language" only in the last two grades, then the words "has not studied" are written in the corresponding line of that subject in the certificate of secondary education, and if the learner can be exempt from the state final exam for "Armenian Language and Armenian Literature" upon his or her desire, then the words "is exempt" are written in the relevant line of the certificate. Such applicants are provided with test items in Russian language by the Assessment and Testing Centre.
111. In addition to the previous periodic report, we inform that in accordance with the 2001-2005 state programme for the development of education in the Republic of Armenia confirmed in 2001, it was envisaged to optimise the territorial distribution of educational institutions, the learner-teacher relationship indicators for organising the activities of educational institutions, the average density of groups of students, the average load of teachers and the relations between auxiliary and administrative staffs. The programme was implemented in 2006 and it did not endanger education in the languages of minorities.
112. In addition to the previous report, we inform that the general education school in Higher Dvin of Ararat Marz of the Republic of Armenia, as all state general education institutions of the Republic, receives state funding in accordance with the student-number formula for funding. The community has no relation with this formula for funding, and the funds allocated to the school for organising the process of education are sufficient. The community participates in organising extracurricular cultural events.
113. In 1995, the "Arbela" Armenian-Russian-Assyrian Scientific-Cultural Centre was established at the secondary school of Higher Dvin. The goal of creating the centre at the school is to start raising national awareness in school and establish the foundations for knowledge of the native language, literature, history and culture. "Arbela" Centre

organises conferences at the school with the Institutes of Oriental Studies and History. The school in Higher Dvin also has an “Arbela” Dance Group.

114. The regional council of Ararat Marz of the Republic of Armenia has included the secondary school in Higher Dvin in the first stage of the renovation programme; it has strengthened the foundation of the school and has repaired the roof and sanitary facilities in the academic year of 2010-2011. Micro programmes for pre-school education have been introduced at the expense of grants in pre-schools of the Higher Dvin and Dimitrov communities, including the kindergarten in Higher Dvin (29 children) and the kindergarten in Dimitrov (30 children); the institutions have been renovated, designed and furnished.
115. In 2009, by the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, relevant experts translated the “Native Studies” textbook (“Zangak 1997”) from Armenian to Russian for 5<sup>th</sup> grade pupils and provided the textbooks to pupils of the schools of national minorities. With the support of the Interstate Humanitarian Cooperation Foundation of countries that are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the mathematics textbooks for higher grades of general education schools have been translated from Armenian to Russian and have been provided to the schoolchildren of national minorities at no cost. This process is ongoing, and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia is carrying out activities to organise the translation of required textbooks.
116. Problems with irregular attendance of learners of inclusive and general education institutions are of a general nature and are in the focus of the public administration authorities of the Republic. By the assignment of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the relevant government agencies are currently organising activities to improve the mechanisms for engaging all schoolchildren, including those of national minorities in general education.
117. Armenian authorities encourage the communities’ efforts to provide secondary education in Assyrian, Kurdish and Yezidi languages for the representatives of national minorities. The commissions for the subjects “Law” and “Jewish Studies” of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia meet the educational needs of Yezidis, Kurds and Assyrians and implement the expert examinations of curricula,

textbooks and manuals in the relevant languages at the National Institute of Education. The issue relating to teacher training in the Republic is being solved. Since 2011, Armenia has started the process of mandatory teacher training at general education schools. The training is ongoing, and all teachers will be trained in the course of the next five years. But the preparation of sufficient high-quality pedagogical staff, as well as the creation of modern teaching materials, depend more on the activities of the communities of national minorities.

- "d)**
- i.** to make available technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
  - ii.** to make available a substantial part of technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages; or
  - iii.** to provide, within technical and vocational education, for the teaching of the relevant regional or minority languages as an integral part of the curriculum; or
  - iv. to apply one of the measures provided for under i to iii above at least to those pupils who, or where appropriate whose families, so wish in a number considered sufficient"**

118. In accordance with the demands in the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages, technical and vocational education in the relevant regional or minority languages is accessible to the students who (or, if possible, whose families) so wish in a number considered sufficient.

119. Technical and vocational education in the relevant languages is suitable for the communities of national minorities using languages under the protection of the Republic of Armenia, or the teaching of languages of national minorities are provided within technical and vocational education as an integral part of the curriculum for students who (or whose families) so wish in a number considered sufficient.

120. The Yerevan State College of Humanities has a Russian department. In accordance with the formats of the State Educational Standards of Intermediate Vocational Education established by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, the graduate of the school with the general curriculum for professions of intermediate vocational education must communicate in at least two foreign languages. The teaching of Russian as a foreign language at all technical and vocational education institutions of the Republic is implemented as an integral part of the curriculum.

121. By the decree of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia of 15 May 2006, the "Yerevan State College of Food Industry" was renamed "Yerevan State Armenian-Greek College of Tourism, Service and Food Industry". After being renamed, the college started organising education for two more professions, including "Tourism" and "Organising Service at Hotels and Touristic Complexes" and the subjects "Greek Language" and "History of Greek Culture" were included in the curricula. In addition, Greek, which is taught upon the student's desire, has been included in the list of preferred subjects in the lesson plans for all professions at the college.

122. The Yezidi and Kurdish departments that were opened at the Yerevan State Pedagogical College after Bakunts terminated their activities two years later due to the lack of applicants. Those departments of the college may restart their activities in the case of the presence of applicants. The employees of the Department for National Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia frequently organise visits to all Yezidi and Kurdish communities to raise awareness about their rights and the opportunities of representatives of national minorities to receive an education. The employees will also try to reveal youth that have the desire for distance learning. There have not been any applicants from the Yezidi-Kurdish ethnic communities wishing to receive technical and vocational education.

123. The representatives of the Assyrian ethnic community also have not expressed the desire to receive technical or vocational education.

"e. i. to make available university and other higher education in regional or minority
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languages; or

ii. to provide facilities for the study of these languages as university and higher education subjects; or

**iii. if, by reason of the role of the State in relation to higher education institutions, subparagraphs i and ii cannot be applied, to encourage and/or allow the provision of university or other forms of higher education in regional or minority languages or of facilities for the study of these languages as university or higher education subjects"**

124. University or other higher education in the relevant languages is suitable for those using the minority languages under the protection of the Republic of Armenia, or the teaching of relevant minority languages is ensured within the university or other higher education as an integral part of the curricula, at least for those students who have submitted such an application in a number considered sufficient.

125. The teaching of national minority languages within higher education is organised even in the case of insufficient number of students. The Yezidi and Kurdish languages are not separated as separate languages in the process of organising higher education. Yezidi, Kurdish and Assyrian languages are taught as mandatory subjects at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University, if the teaching of those languages is relevant to the profession chosen by the student. Graduates of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University are allowed to work as teachers of the relevant languages. Yerevan Management University offers teaching of the Yezidi language.

126. Classic Assyrian has been taught at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the 1<sup>st</sup> year and in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Master's programme starting from the academic year of 2005-2006. The university is planning the preparation of experts in different spheres of Assyrian studies and the teaching of modern Assyrian.

127. The teaching of Greek language as a mandatory subject is implemented at Yerevan State University and Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Bryusov. 140-150 students listen to lectures on this subject at these two higher education institutions during each academic year. Other higher education institutions, for instance, Yerevan Management University also offers teaching of the Greek language. Yerevan University of Culture has a Greek Language Department; the University after Hrachya Atcharyan offers special Greek language courses.

128. The students of Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Linguistic University after Bryusov, the Armenian State Pedagogical University, Gyumri State Pedagogical University, Vanadzor State Pedagogical University, Gavar State University and the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University take a course on Russian language as a mandatory subject during each academic year.

129. Every year the republican admission commission allocates target spots from the reserve spots to the Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish communities by the proposal of the given community, based on the results of the entrance exams. By the decision of the republican admission commission for teaching in the academic year of 2011-2012 at higher education institutions of the Republic of Armenia, a free spot has been allocated from the reserve spots for the subject "030800-Jurisprudence" for the Yezidi community at Yerevan State University and the subject "051100-Pedagogy and Methodology" for the Assyrian community at the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan.

**"f)** i. to arrange for the provision of adult and continuing education courses which are taught mainly or wholly in the regional or minority languages; or

ii. to offer such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education; or

**iii. if the public authorities have no direct competence in the field of adult education, to favour and/or encourage the offering of such languages as subjects of adult and continuing education"**

130. Greek language courses are held in Yerevan, Alaverdi, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Stepanavan, Noyemberyan cities and Koghes village on Sundays. The courses are organised by the Union of Greek Non-Governmental Organisations. The courses are open to everyone, without restrictions of age and nationality.

131. In 1999, the conception on "Russian language in the system of education and the cultural-public life of the Republic of Armenia" was confirmed by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, one of the provisions of which is "to organise short-term and long-term Russian language courses (with the opportunity of obtaining a second profession)". Several non-governmental organisations offer teaching of the Russian language for adults. It should be mentioned that the courses are attended exclusively by Armenians.

132. A demand for adult or continuing education in the Assyrian language has not been presented since adults do not have good command of their language.

133. There is no need of organising adult or continuing education courses in Yezidi and Kurdish languages since adult Kurds and Yezidi have sufficient command of their language. The Kurds and the Yezidi even consider the question nonsensical.

#### **Article 9. Judicial authorities**

**"Point 1**

**The Parties undertake, in respect of those judicial districts in which the number of residents using the regional or minority languages**

**justifies the measures specified below, according to the**

**situation of each of these languages and on condition that the use of the facilities afforded by the present paragraph**

**is not considered by the judge to hamper the proper administration of justice:**

**a. in criminal proceedings:**

**ii. to guarantee the accused the right to use his/her regional or minority language; and/or**

**iii. to provide that requests and evidence, whether written or oral, shall not be considered inadmissible solely because they are formulated in a regional or minority language; and/or**

**iv. to produce, on request, documents connected with legal proceedings in the relevant regional or minority language, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations involving no extra expense for the persons concerned”**

134. Article 15 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia stipulates, that the criminal proceedings in the Republic of Armenia shall be conducted in Armenian; however, everyone, except for the body conducting criminal proceeding, shall have the right to act in the language he or she has command of. In addition, it is prescribed, that by the decision of a body conducting criminal proceedings, persons participating in criminal proceedings, which do not have command of the language of the criminal proceedings, shall be provided with the opportunity of exercising their rights prescribed by this Code with the assistance of an interpreter at the expense of state resources. Respective persons having no command of the language of criminal proceedings shall be provided with the ratified copies of relevant documents provided for by this Code, in the language they have command of.

135. Article 3(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia stipulates that within the territory of the Republic of Armenia, irrespective of the scene of the crime, criminal proceeding shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this Code, unless otherwise prescribed by the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia. Therefore, the documents to be provided to the person belonging to a national minority may, at his/her request, be submitted to him/her in the form of certified copies in the relevant minority language even if that person has command of Armenian, as it will be necessary to act under the requirements of the Charter. By virtue of this principle, we consider that persons belonging to national minorities who have

command of the language of the proceedings may also request, that documents be submitted to them in the form of certified copies in their own language.

136. The courts of the Republic of Armenia conducted judicial proceedings in 2008-2011, in which 182 persons involved in criminal cases and 916 persons involved in civil cases participated speaking the language of national minorities. During the course of judicial proceedings the number of persons speaking Armenian was as follows: 159 persons involved in criminal cases; 894 persons involved in civil cases, and the number of persons speaking the language of national minorities was as follows: 7 persons involved in criminal cases; 14 persons involved in civil cases. Although having command of Armenian, persons speaking the language of national minorities had requested an interpreter when participating in the judicial proceedings; particularly, 16 persons involved in criminal cases; 8 persons involved in civil cases. Decisions, which have been adopted in Armenian by the body conducting judicial proceedings and have been translated and provided to persons speaking the language of national minorities, go as follows: 14 for criminal cases; 6 for civil cases. There have been no cases of depriving a person, who participates in judicial proceedings and speaks the language of a national minority, of the right to use relevant language when appearing in person before a court even if having command of Armenian, irrespective of additional expenses such appearance would incur for the state. There have also been no such cases, where the operator conducting the proceeding, would not accept the written evidence submitted by a person, who speaks the language of a national minority and participates in judicial proceeding, reasoning that the evidence presented is not written in Armenian and is thus incomprehensible.

**“b. in civil proceedings:**

**ii. to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense”**

137. Article 7 of the Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia was amended on 28 November 2007. In accordance with Article 7 of the Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia, civil proceedings shall be conducted in Armenian language; the participants of the proceedings shall have the right to act in the court in the language preferred thereby, where they provide interpretation into Armenian language.

138. In accordance with Article 1(2) of the Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia, the norms of international treaties shall apply, where the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia provide for procedural norms other than those provided for by the Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia. Thus, in accordance with international treaties, a person belonging to a national minority may use his/her native language or any other language of his/her choice in court during civil proceedings even if he/she has command of Armenian. The ethnic communities of the Republic of Armenia are regularly informed on their rights stipulated by national and international treaties and have all legal grounds to use their rights.

**“c. in proceedings before courts concerning administrative matters:**

**ii. to allow, whenever a litigant has to appear in person before a court, that he or she may use his or her regional or minority language without thereby incurring additional expense; and/or,**

**iii. to allow documents and evidence to be produced in the regional or minority languages, if necessary by the use of interpreters and translations”**

139. In the courts of the Republic of Armenia administrative proceedings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Armenia. Therefore, the aforementioned information refers administrative matters as well, and the right of a person belonging to a national minority to use his or her native language whenever he or she has to appear in person before a court refers administrative matters as well.

140. The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings" was adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on 18 February 2004. Article 27 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings" stipulates: "Administrative proceedings

shall be conducted and administrative act shall be adopted in Armenian language. Individuals, who have command of national minority languages in the Republic of Armenia, may, in a procedure prescribed by law or in conformity with international treaties to which the Republic of Armenia is a State Party, submit an application for administrative proceedings and supporting documents provided in the relevant minority language. In that case, administrative authority may request the translations of the documents be submitted in Armenian language”.

141. In accordance with Article 27 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings”, participants may use foreign languages in the course of administrative proceedings. However, these persons shall be obliged to ensure Armenian interpretation through their own interpreter if the administrative authority is unable to provide for such interpretation. As to the use of languages of a national minority by representatives of national minorities when communicating orally with officials of administrative authorities, every official, who has command of any language of national minorities, may freely communicate with them in that language.

142. In accordance with Article 59 of the Law “On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings”, the administrative authority having adopted the act may, upon the request of the addressee of the written administrative act, provide him or her the copy of the administrative act translated into a foreign language, which should be endorsed with the official seal of the relevant administrative body. Article 93 of the Law stipulates, that payments to interpreters shall be made from the budget of the Republic of Armenia or from the budget of the respective community, depending on which administrative authority has invited those persons (state or local self-government body). Only where the interpreter has been invited by a participant of the administrative proceedings, the relevant expenses shall be incurred by that participant.

**“d. to take steps to ensure that the application of sub-paragraphs i and iii of paragraphs b and c above and any necessary use of interpreters and translations does not involve extra expense for the persons concerned”.**

143. As the aforementioned shows, the legislation of the Republic of Armenia creates no obstacles for persons participating in judicial proceedings to act in their national language whenever they have to appear before a court (and in Armenian, if they so desire). Studies on certain issues conducted by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia show, that the courts have demonstrated no discrimination towards representatives of national minorities by virtue of nationality of the latter or by virtue of any other reason, and there have been no problems with regard to languages of national minorities in Armenia; moreover, the representatives of national minorities of the country have command of Armenian language, and certain officials have command of minority languages.

**Point 3**

**“The Parties undertake to make available in the regional or minority languages the most important national statutory texts and those relating particularly to speakers of these languages, unless they are otherwise provided”.**

144. The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia publishes and republishes, when necessary, official bulletins concerning codes and laws of the Republic of Armenia, with a view to informing nationals of the Republic of Armenia (including national minorities) of their rights. Legal acts are adopted in Armenian in the Republic of Armenia. The website of the National Assembly contains Russian translation of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and the Criminal Procedure, the Civil, Labour, Family, Penitentiary, Customs and Land Codes, as well as other important laws and legal acts.

145. Given the fact that the majority of the population of Armenia do not have ready access to electronic means of communication, the Department of National Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Armenia regularly organises visits and discussions for minorities to raise their awareness in the field of their rights.

146. The translation of all legal acts of the Republic of Armenia into the languages of national minorities requires substantial financial resources, and the scarcity of financial resources of the country does not permit to implement this at present. In addition, the experience gained



during the translation of the text of the Armenian Constitution into Yezidi revealed a number of difficulties regarding the precise formulation of terms and definitions, as well as the lack of appropriate specialists. Discussions held with presidents of non-governmental organisations, members of communities of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia indicate, that there is no demand for translations of the laws of the Republic of Armenia into the languages of minorities, since the laws interpreted in Armenian or Russian are readily available to and applicable for them.

147. It should be noted that, there has never been any linguistic barrier in Armenia depriving members of the national minority of the opportunity to make efficient use of their constitutional rights in order to safeguard their rights and interests. The ethnic communities of the Republic of Armenia have much better command of Armenian or Russian than of ethnic languages and in practice, no complications arise, from the linguistic point of view, with regard to knowledge of law.

#### **Article 10. Administrative authorities and public services**

**“1. Within the administrative districts of the State in which the number of residents who are speakers of regional or minority languages justifies the measures specified below and according to the situation of each language, the Parties undertake, as far as this is reasonably possible:**

**a. iv. to ensure that speakers of regional or minority languages may submit oral or written applications in these languages; or**

**v. to ensure that speakers of regional or minority languages may validly submit a document in these languages”**

148. As has been mentioned, the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On fundamentals of administrative action and administrative proceedings” enables submitting applications to administrative bodies of the Republic of Armenia in the languages of national minorities.

Thus, the legislation of the Republic of Armenia does not prohibit the possibility of applying to public authorities in the language of national authorities.

The reply to the written application is given in the state language, but in the territories, where the given measures are justified by the number of the population speaking in minority languages, the official reply can be given also in the national language.

149. The rare usage of Assyrian or Greek languages in the oral or written communication with administrative authorities is conditioned also by the fact that the Assyrian and Greek communities have insufficient use of their ethnic language and do not know the written language. At the same time, the authorities of the Republic of Armenia cannot compel the national minorities to use their ethnic languages in their communication with administrative bodies.

**1. "b/ to make available widely used administrative texts and forms for the population in the regional or minority languages or in bilingual versions"**

150. The majority of the administrative texts and forms, which are widely used in the Republic, are available also in Russian. The national minorities of Armenia have good knowledge of Armenian or Russian and the representatives of ethnic communities have no connection with the implementation of the administrative documents.

**"2. With regard to the local and regional authorities, in the territory of which the number of resident population, which speaks the regional or minority languages justifies the measures mentioned below, the Parties shall be obliged to allow and/or urge:**

**b/ to give possibility to the speakers of regional or minority languages to submit application in the written or oral form in that languages"**

151. The Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled with regard to Russian, Kurdish and Yezidi languages, partially fulfilled with regard to Assyrian and formally fulfilled with regard to Greek language. With regard to the given obligation we also state that this right is not fully used by the Assyrian and Greeks because of their insufficient knowledge of their ethnic, and, in particular, written language. As to the oral language, the authorities of Armenia cannot make national minorities use by all means their mother language while communicating with local and regional bodies.

152. According to the requirements of the Charter with regard to the local and marz authorities, this provision can be implemented when "the number of population residing in that territory and speaking in regional or minority languages justifies the measures mentioned below". The Greeks do not constitute a sufficient number in any Marz and even in any village as to make the use of their language required. A substantial number of Greeks residing in villages are seniors, who have no wish to study Greek language. For that reason implementation of some provisions of the Charter for the ethnic Greek community in Armenia is just impossible. Village chiefs in Assyrian villages Verin Dvin and Arzni are Assyrians and if they wish they can use and do often use their mother tongue.

**"f/ the use by local authorities of regional or minority languages in debates in their assemblies, without excluding, however, the use of the official language(s) of the State"**

153. The Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled with regard to Kurdish, Assyrian, Yezidi and Russian languages. In previous points of the report it was stated that the Greeks do not fully use some rights, since they have no sufficient knowledge of their mother tongue. In reality, Greek is used mainly in educational institutions, where Greek is taught. Even members of Greek ethnic community's NGOs communicate with each other in Armenian or Russian.

**"g/ the use or adoption, if necessary in conjunction with the name in the official language(s), of traditional and correct forms of place-names in regional or minority languages"**

154. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled.

**"3. With regard to public services provided by the administrative authorities or other persons acting on their behalf, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which regional or minority languages are used, in accordance with the situation of each language and as far as this is reasonably possible:**

**c/ to allow users of regional or minority languages to submit a request in these languages"**

155. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled.

**"4. With a view to putting into effect those provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 accepted by them, the Parties undertake to take one or more of the following measures:**

**c/ meet as far as possible the requests from public service employees having a knowledge of a regional or minority language to be appointed in the territory in which that language is used"**

156. With regard to public servants of the Republic of Armenia there is no prohibition in communicating with national minority languages. Moreover, authorities take into account the knowledge of languages by officials who work in corresponding territories, for example, one of the employees of the National Assembly Staff of the Republic of Armenia is an ethnic Yezidi; one of the employees of the Department of National Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Staff of the Government of the Republic of Armenia is also an ethnic Yezidi and speaks Yezidi/Kurdish language.

157. In Armenia public officials and public servants have sufficient knowledge of Russian. In Republic's villages with mixed national population the representatives of national minorities are engaged in marzpetaran staff and bodies under marzpetarans, local self-government bodies of political and village communities, are appointed to the positions of both community leader and the members of the council of elders.

158. By the decision of the Committee of National Minority Issues of the Public Council of the Republic of Armenia delivered at the sitting of 18 June 2010, it was proposed to appoint public servants in the territories, where languages of national minorities are used, encouraging the use of Kurdish and Yezidi languages in administrative dealings, to add a separate subject of knowledge of national minorities in the examination of public servants working in marzes, which have settlements with national minorities. The proposal was discussed at the Republic of Armenian Civil Service Council. In the result of discussion it was decided that during organisation of competitions for vacancies in the positions of civil services in corresponding bodies, the assessment of the knowledge of Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish languages is practically impossible due to the lack of necessary experts, tests and questionnaires. Anyway, for the solution of the issue the Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia proposed, as an intermediate measure, to give a right to the public official, who is authorised to appoint to the service position, to give priority from the winners of the competition to the participant with knowledge of Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish.

**"5. The Parties undertake to allow the use or adoption of family names in the regional or minority languages, at the request of those concerned"**

**Article 11. Media**

**"1. The Parties undertake, for the users of the regional or minority languages within the territories in which those languages are spoken, according to the situation of each language, to the extent that the public authorities, directly or indirectly, are competent, have power or play a role in this field, and respecting the principle of the independence and autonomy of media:**

**a/ to the extent that radio and television carry out a public service mission:**

**iii. to ensure the creation of at least one radio station and one television channel in the regional or minority languages; or**

**b/ ii. to encourage and/or facilitate the creation of at least one radio station and one television channel in the regional or minority languages;**

**g/ ii. to make adequate provision so that broadcasters offer programmes in the regional or minority languages";**

160. "According to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Television and Radio" the Public television and radio company develops and implements programme policy. Article 26 of the Law defines the following: "To provide broadcast time for broadcasting special programmes in national languages of the Republic of Armenia". The overall time for these programmes should not exceed 2 hours weekly for the TV, and up to 1 hour daily for the radio. Special programmes and television programmes in national minority languages of the Republic of Armenia must be accompanied by Armenian caption". Currently by the assignment of the President of the Republic of Armenia and under the leadership of Ombudsman a working group was established for improving the Law "On Television and Radio".

161. According to the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Television and Radio” the National Committee of Television has conducted 25 competitions during 2010 for carrying out air broadcasting through digital broadcasting, from which 4 for re-broadcasters and 21 – for the broadcasters. In each competition one company has participated; three companies carry out re-broadcasting of television programmes in Russian. Television companies are not limited in their broadcasting of programmes in minority languages; moreover, almost all companies have clearly stated in their competition packages, that they are ready to find in their broadcast cultural, historical, educational and other programmes about national minority communities, as well as to provide broadcast time at the same time.

162. Analytical, informative and rights awareness programmes mainly in Armenian or Russian languages periodically are broadcast by public and other television companies by the initiative or participation of representatives of national minorities. By the request of TV journalists, the representatives of national minorities speak in their languages while commenting the events or festivals of national minorities. Television companies operating in marzes of the Republic broadcast different programme series, periodically elucidate issues raised by national minorities.

163. Armenian Public Radio every day broadcasts in national minority languages, in particular in Assyrian – 15 minutes, in Kurdish – 30 minutes, in Yezidi - 30 minutes, in Russian – 15 minutes. The absence of Greek language programmes is conditioned by the absence of experts; nevertheless, the management of Public Radio does everything to solve this issue during this year.

**“e. i. to encourage and/or facilitate the creation and/or maintenance of at least one newspaper in the regional or minority languages; or”**

164. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia allocates financial means each year for supporting the publication of printed press of national minorities. By the budget programme “State support to non-state media” the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia supported

publication of 13 printed press and 4 magazines in the languages of national minorities. It must be noted, that the majority of national minorities of Armenia continues to publish media in Armenian and Russian languages.

165. The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia provides financial support to the publication of periodicals of literarily, cultural, scientific and other media in the languages of national minorities, among which are the following : “Ezdikhana” and “Lalysh” newspapers of the Yezidi community in Armenian language, “Golos Armenii”, “Novoe Vremya” newspapers of Russian community and “Literaturnaya Armenia” newspaper and magazine in Russian language, “Rya taza” and “Zagros” newspapers in Kurdish language, “Byuzandakan Ozhandakutyun” newspaper and magazine of the Greek community.

166. The representatives of the Assyrian community are aware that the financial means are constantly provided from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia for the support of periodicals of national minorities, but they have not brought forward any initiatives of having published periodicals in their mother tongues.

167. During 2008-2011 with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia and by the project “Publication of literature of national minorities and other literature” 10 different names of books were published, among which “Our village” by Amarike Sardar and “Stories” by Samand Sima, “Poetry” by Mame Alikhane, “Yntrani” by Shamoyan Smo, “Collection of poetry” by Yuri Aleksandrov, “Zhoghovatsu” by a group of authors.

**“2. The Parties undertake to guarantee freedom of direct reception of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in a language used in identical or similar form to a regional or minority language, and not to oppose the retransmission of radio and television broadcasts from neighbouring countries in such a language.**

**They further undertake to ensure that no restrictions will be placed on the freedom of expression and free circulation of information in the written press in a language used in identical or similar form to a regional or minority language.**

**The exercise of the above-mentioned freedoms, since it carries with it duties and**



**responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary”.**

168. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled.

**“3. The Parties undertake to ensure that the interests of the users of regional or minority languages are represented or taken into account within such bodies as may be established in accordance with the law with responsibility for guaranteeing the freedom and pluralism of media.”**

169. The National Committee of Radio and Television is a body provided by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, which provides the freedom, independence and diversity of broadcasting media means. The principle of formation of the committee is prescribed by the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Armenia. The four of NCRT members are appointed through competition by the President of the Republic of Armenia, and the other four are elected by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia. At the same time a requirement for committee member candidacy nominations is the recommendation given by two or more NGOs. The principles of NCRT activity are lawfulness, democracy, equality, impartiality, independence, collegiality and publicity. Free selection, production and dissemination right of television programmes is guaranteed by the Law "On Television and Radio". The censorship of the television programmes is prohibited. Anyone has a right to receive television programmes and additional information, including satellite, cable networks, free or paid, both by decoding means and by open television and radio networks.

170. According to the Article 26 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Television and Radio” to provide the television and radio audience with such programme series and types, which also present the interests of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. According to Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Mass Media,” the information means are issued and disseminated without preliminary or current state registration, licencing, declaration in state or any other authority or notification of any authority. By the same Article of the law the censorship is prohibited, as well as the limitation of the right of a person to make use of information means issued and disseminated abroad. The Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Mass Media” does not provide for any requirement as to the language of the information means, which gives more possibilities to the information means to disseminate information in the language (languages) it chooses.

#### **Article 12. Cultural activity and possibilities**

**“1. With regard to cultural activities and facilities – especially libraries, video libraries, cultural centres, museums, archives, academies, theatres and cinemas, as well as literary work and film production, vernacular forms of cultural expression, festivals and the culture industries, including inter alia the use of new technologies – the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used and to the extent that the public authorities are competent, have power or play a role in this field:**

**a. to encourage types of expression and initiative specific to regional or minority languages and foster the different means of access to works produced in these languages”**

171. The Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled, nevertheless it is expected to receive information on increase and review of financial allocations provided for cultural events of national minorities by the authorities.

172. By the proposal of the council under the Advisor to the President of the Republic of Armenia, which coordinates national-cultural organisations of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, beginning from 2000 ten million drams are yearly provided for the support of educational cultural activities of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia, which is allocated according to the decision made at the sitting of the Council as a result of the majority of votes of the members. The decisions of the Council related to the allocation of financial means have stayed unchanged from 2000 till now, that is from 10 million drams provided from the state budget 9 million drams are allocated equally to the 11 national minority communities of the Republic of Armenia through organisation represented at the Council, and to provide 1 million drams for implementation of the best programmes and joint events presented at the discussions of the Council by the organisation representing different communities. The list of joint events and presented programmes are also discussed and approved at the session of the Council. At the sitting of the Council on 19.01.2012 the abovementioned procedure of allocation of 10 million drams was again approved. As to the review of the 10 million drams allocated by the state, during past years the chairmen of the Council have applied in written form by different justifications to the Government of the Republic of Armenia with the purpose of increasing the amount. Nevertheless, because of financial economic crisis the positive solution of the issue was delayed. The leaders of national-cultural organisations represented at the Council have applied to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia with similar request at the end of 2011. Anyway, the state budget of 2012 was already approved, so the Government of the Republic of Armenia deemed reasonable to present the proposal of the increase of the amount at the 2013 budget discussions not excluding additional financial allocations from the reserve fund of the state budget in 2012.

173. In April 2012 the Government of the Republic of Armenia made 10 million additional allocation from the state budget's reserve fund to national minorities of the Republic of Armenia with the purpose of implementation of programmes directed at the development of the culture of national minorities, protection of language and self identity, as well as raising the awareness of the representatives of national minorities in the legal field. Corresponding programmes were presented to discussion by the organisations representing 11 communities in the Council

coordinating the national cultural organisation of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia. The sitting on 3 May 2012 has approved through voting the programmes elected in the result of discussions and the amount for implementation of that programmes have been transferred to the corresponding organisations.

174. The Ministry of Finances of the Republic of Armenia has examined the issue of increasing the amount allocated to the national minorities and proposed to include it in the middle term state expenditure programme of 2013-2015 if there is a corresponding application. The application was provided by the state authorised body.

**“d. to ensure that the bodies responsible for organising or supporting cultural activities of various kinds make appropriate allowance for incorporating the knowledge and use of regional or minority languages and cultures in the undertakings which they initiate or for which they provide support”**

175. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled.

**“f. to encourage direct participation by representatives of the users of a given regional or minority language in providing facilities and planning cultural activities”**

176. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled, nevertheless it suggests providing information on the cultural centres operating in marzes.

177. Within the framework of implementation of cultural state policy the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia jointly with the Ministry of Urban development and the Ministry of Territorial Administration periodically organises discussions of middle term expenditure programmes and budgetary claims received from marzes and communities of the

Republic of Armenia for renovation and building of culture houses and clubs. As a result of discussions culture houses are periodically being renovated or built in different communities, among which in the territories where national minorities live.

**"2. In respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage and/or provide appropriate cultural activities and facilities in accordance with the preceding paragraph"**

178. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled.

**"3. The Parties undertake to make appropriate provision, in pursuing their cultural policy abroad, for regional or minority languages and the cultures they reflect"**

179. The cultures of national minorities of the Republic are also presented abroad within possibilities. In 2009 K. Stanislavski State Russian Drama Theatre participated in "Solo" international theatre festival of solo performances in Moscow. The Republic of Armenia is ready to create conditions for fulfilling the obligation undertaken as to the Greek, Kurdish and Yezidi languages, but the scarcity of financial means makes it difficult to fulfil this obligation.

### **Article 13. Economic and social life**

**"1. With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, within the**

**whole country:**

**b. to prohibit the insertion in internal regulations of companies and private documents of any clauses excluding or restricting the use of regional or minority languages, at least between users of the same language"**

180. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled.

**"c. to oppose practices designed to discourage the use of regional or minority languages in connection with economic or social activities"**

181. Charter experts' committee deems the obligation fulfilled.

**"d. to facilitate and/or encourage the use of regional or minority languages by means other than those specified in the above sub-paragraphs"**

182. Each year in the yearly and middle term expenditure programme of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia budgetary allocations through the "Support to the culture of national minorities" sub-programme of "Support to the implementation of cultural events" programme are provided for the support of the cultural events of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia.

183. Exhibitions of art, decorative applied crafts and music festivals are conducted through financing of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia in Yerevan and marzes with participation of all communities of national minorities. Visual arts and decorative applied crafts exhibitions for national minorities are traditionally being implemented: during 2008-2011 four exhibitions were conducted and four music festivals of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia were organised. From 2008 a new programme is implemented in the Republic – “Organisation of visits to the monuments of the national minorities of the Republic of Armenia and creation of documentaries”. One of the programmes started from 2008 is “Publication of literature of national minorities”, in particular, “Collection of literary works of authors of national minorities” was published, where authors from national minorities were presented. The day of protection of children was celebrated in 2008 in A. Babajanyan music hall, where children of national minorities presented their art, songs and dances. “Council of nationalities of the Republic of Armenia” NGO has organised the presentation of the book “Our Village” /in Kurdish/ by Amarike Sardar who is the president of the “Council of Kurdish intellectuals” NGO. “Assyrians in Armenia” movie was filmed in 2009. On 21 September 2009 a procession titled “Armenia is my home” and music festival was organised, to which representatives from all national minorities participated, as well as 22 minute documentary with English translation was filmed about the festival.

184. During 2009-2011 the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia has supported the organisation of the youth competition festival “Singing the songs of Arno Babajanyan” organised by the “Harmony” Russian cultural international centre NGO. In 2010 the Staff of the President of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia organised the events celebrating the 10 year anniversary of the Coordinating Council of National Minorities’ National Cultural Organisations of the Republic of Armenia, in the framework of which the eighth exhibition of fine arts and decorative applied crafts and the seventh music festival of national minorities of the Republic of Armenia was organised. In 2011 “Ilios Greek community” NGO was supported for organising “Visit to Akhtala Greek Church” event. Beginning from 2008 the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia has launched a new programme for the provision of recognition of historical and modern monuments of national minorities - production of film series. A 34-minute documentary titled “Our song and our monuments” was filmed about the northern region of Armenia – Aragatsotn and Lori, in which the music festival of Akhtala was also presented.

185. One of the important objectives of the cultural policy of the Republic of Armenia is the inclusion of the performers and groups of national minorities in the cultural events of the Republic. In particular, in order to enliven and encourage the cultural life and creative groups in marzes the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia always invites corresponding groups of national minorities, encourages their work, elucidates their work in mass media. All above mentioned events implemented by the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia promotes the use of languages of national minorities in economic and social life.

**"2. With regard to economic and social activities, the Parties undertake, in so far as the public authorities are competent, within the territory in which the regional or minority languages are used, and as far as this is reasonably possible:**

**b/ in the economic and social sectors directly under their control (public sector), to organise activities to promote the use of regional or minority languages"**

186. The languages of national minorities are in reality used in places where public services are provided. Russian language is often used in transport, postal services, airport and in different public places. As it was already mentioned, Russian language is used by many people who have their own ethnic identity, moreover, the majority of them considers Russian as a mother language. In case of need, placement of topographic posters in corresponding languages is provided for representatives of national minorities. During different cultural events, consultations, discussions organised in marzes with participation of national minorities, ethnic languages are used as well. The use of languages of national minorities in different settlements of the Republic is encouraged by the presence of mixed marriage families.

**"c/ to ensure that social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language who are in need of care on grounds of ill-**



health, old age or for other reasons”

187. Assyrian, Greek, Kurdish and Yezidi doctors work in the field of health protection of the Republic of Armenia, who can help solve issues emerged. Anyway, up to this day no complaint was received, that any representative of national minority of Armenia was deprived of care or faced difficulties because of language in institutions of public care. It is possible that no language of national minorities, except Russian, is used in hospitals, but the issue is that those who go to hospital or turn to a doctor themselves use Armenian or Russian languages. In rare cases of not knowing languages of national minorities the communication with representatives of national minorities is carried out through relatives or persons who know the language, including through the interpreters. The patients in those cases do not incur financial expenses.

#### **Article 14. Transfrontier exchanges**

**“The Parties undertake:**

- a. to apply existing bilateral and multilateral agreements which bind them with the States in which the same language is used in identical or similar form, or if necessary to seek to conclude such agreements, in such a way as to foster contacts between the users of the same language in the States concerned in the fields of culture, education, information, vocational training and permanent education**
- b. for the benefit of regional or minority languages, to facilitate and/ or promote co-operation across borders, in particular between regional or local authorities in whose territory the same language is used in identical or similar form”**

188. Charter experts’ committee deems the obligation fulfilled

## Part 5

### Implementation of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter by Armenia

Summarising the measures taken directed at application of the principles of the Charter and implementation of the provisions of the Charter, as well as the programmes implemented, taking into account also the Recommendations of the Committee of Experts, we report the following concerning the assignment of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter by Armenia.

**Armenian authorities should take into account all the remarks and proposals of the Committee of Experts and as a priority:**

**1. “should develop a coordinated policy for making available the training of sufficient number of teachers and training materials in Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish”**

- The Republic of Armenia continues to make consistent efforts for the training of teachers of Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish, in particular, in institutions of higher education places provided for entry under privileged conditions are allocated for the representatives of national minorities: The employees of the Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs Department of the Government Staff of the Republic of Armenia regularly organise consultations with the aim of informing about the rights and opportunities of the representatives of national minorities of getting education and at the same time trying to reveal the young persons wishing to study from a pedagogical perspective. The issue of the training of pedagogical resources is being solved in the Republic: the process the mandatory training of teachers of schools of general education, which is a continuous process and the training of all teachers shall be implemented during five years. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia has approved the criteria and the programme of Assyrian and Kurdish for 1-12 grades. The Ministry financed the publication of the textbook for the 1 grade "Speak in Assyrian", the textbook-copybook for the 2 grade "Write and read in Assyrian" , the Kurdish book "ABC book" , textbooks "Yezidi 6", "Yezidi 7", "Yezidi 8" ,

the republication of the textbook for the 1 grade "Speak in Assyrian", textbooks "Yezidi 1", "Yezidi 2". The textbooks for the 2, 3 and 4 grades and the textbook "Yezidi 9" are ready for publication.

**2. "should guarantee the use of regional or minority languages and should inform the courts and the public about the rights and obligations arising from Article 9 of the Charter"**

- According to the requirements of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia criminal and civil proceedings should be administered in Armenian but everyone has the right to speak in any language he/she has the command of, with the exception of the body conducting the proceedings. Upon the decision of the body conducting the criminal proceedings, the persons participating in the criminal proceedings, who lack sufficient command of the language of the criminal proceedings, at the expense of the state budget are provided with an opportunity to exercise, with the help of an interpreter, all their rights under the provisions of this Code. The persons not having the command of the language of the criminal proceeding may be provided with the certified copies of the documents to be delivered as provided for by the Code in the language they know. The administrative proceedings are conducted in Armenian and the administrative act is also adopted in Armenian. In the Republic of Armenia the persons having the command of the languages of national minorities may submit the application for the conduction of the administrative proceeding and the documents attached to it in the language of the relevant minority in the manner prescribed by law and in compliance with the international agreements. The administrative body having adopted the administrative act may— at the request of the recipient— provide him or her also with the copy of the administrative act translated into other language. The fact of mastering the language of legal acts has never been a reason for a person belonging to a national minority to be deprived of an opportunity of effectively using the constitutional right of protection of his or her rights and legal interests. Official Journals of the Codes and laws of the Republic of Armenia are published and periodically republished by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia aimed at informing the citizens of the Republic of Armenia, including national minorities, of the their rights. In the Republic of Armenia the legal acts are adopted in Armenian language. The Russian versions of the Constitution and the Civil, Labour, Family, Criminal Procedure, Penitentiary, Customs, Land Codes, as well as other

important laws and other legal acts of the Republic of Armenia are placed on the website of the National Assembly. The ethnic communities of the Republic of Armenia are periodically informed of the rights thereof provided for by national and international agreements and enjoy all legal opportunities to use the right thereof.

**3. “Take measures to improve the presence of Assyrian and Greek on radio, and of Assyrian, Yezidi and Kurdish on television”**

- The public radio of Armenia every day broadcasts in the languages of national minorities: in Assyrian– for 15 minutes, in Kurdish– for 30 minutes, in Yezidi- for 30 minutes, in Russian – for 15 minutes. The absence of Greek is conditioned by the lack of specialists, however, the management of the public radio applies best efforts to solve this problem this year. The television companies in the Republic of Armenia are not restricted in broadcasting programmes in the languages of national minorities. Almost all the companies of the Republic had clearly mentioned in the competition packages submitted for the competition held in 2010, that they are ready to find and broadcast cultural, historic, informative and other programmes about communities being national minorities, meantime, expressing willingness to allot air time. According to the results of the competition held by the National Commission on Television and Radio the rebroadcasting of television programmes in Russian are carried out by three companies. Analytical programmes, programmes raising awareness on rights or informative programmes about national minorities are periodically broadcasted on public television and other television companies involving the representatives of national minorities or at the initiative thereof.

**4. “Clarify whether there are other regional or minority languages other than Armenia’s instrument of ratification”.**

- When ratifying the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the Republic of Armenia undertook to devise a policy and define a plan of actions for the protection and development of the national minority languages alone (Russian, Greek, Yezidi, Kurdish and

Assyrian). By the decision of the National Assembly on ratification of the Charter, there are no other national minority languages other than those mentioned.

**Breakdown of the permanent population of the Republic of Armenia into towns and  
villages**

	Nationality						
	Armenians	Assyrians	Yezidis	Greeks	Russians	Kurds	other
Total (dweller)	3145354	3409	40620	1176	14660	1519	6273
Town	2041622	524	7413	853	10489	315	4937
Village	1103732	2885	33207	323	4171	1204	1336

**List of rural settlements with several nationalities or inhabited predominantly by national minorities**

	Settlement	National Minority	Region
1.	Arzni	Assyrians mixed with Armenians	Kotayk
2.	Verin Dvin	Assyrians mixed with Armenians	Ararat
3.	Dmitrov	Assyrians mixed with Armenians	Ararat
4.	Nor Artagers	Assyrians mixed with Armenians and Yezidi	Armavir
5.	Alagyaz	Kurds mixed with Yezidis	Aragatsotn
6.	Sadunts/Amre Taza <sup>1</sup>	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
7.	Avshen	Kurds, partly- Yezidis	Aragatsotn
8.	Mijnatun/Ortatjya	Kurds, partly- Yezidis	Aragatsotn
9.	Rya Taza	Yezidis, partly- Kurds	Aragatsotn
10.	Shenkani	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
11.	Tjartjakis/Derek	Yezidis, partly- Kurds	Aragatsotn
12.	Sipan	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
13.	Mirak	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
14.	Kanishir/Sangyar	Yezidis	Aragatsotn

<sup>1</sup> Two names of settlements – old and new - are given in cases where the name was changed or proposed by the local population.

15.	Jamshlu	Kurds, partly- Yezidis	Aragatsotn
16.	Arevut/Barozh	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
17.	Sorik	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
18.	Shamiram	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
19.	Yeraskhahun	Yezidis mixed with Armenians	Aragatsotn
20.	Ddmasar/Ghabakhtapa	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
21.	Ghazaravan	A number of Yezidis mixed with Armenians	Aragatsotn
22.	Hako/Hakko	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
23.	Kanch/Gyalto	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
24.	Tellek	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
25.	Otevan/Baysez	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
26.	Metsadzor/Avtona	Yezidis	Aragatsotn
27.	Getap	mixed	Aragatsotn
28.	Ayntap	A number of Yezidis mixed with Armenians	Ararat
29.	Hoktember	A number of Yezidis among Armenians	Armavir
30.	Ferik	Yezidis	Armavir
31.	Ardashar	Yezidis	Armavir
32.	Nor Kesaria	A number of Yezidis mixed with	Armavir



		Armenians	
33.	Aygavan	A number of Yezidis mixed with Armenians	Ararat
34.	Zovuni	A number of Yezidis mixed with Armenians	Kotayk Region
35.	Nor Geghi	A number of Yezidis mixed with Armenians	Kotayk Region
36.	Jeraber	A number of Yezidis mixed with Armenians	Kotayk Region
37.	Lermontovo	Russian Molokans with a number of Armenians	Lori Region
38.	Fioletovo	Russian Molokans	Lori Region

**List of settlements providing instruction of Yezidi/Kurdish in state general education schools**

<b>No</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Number of children</b>	<b>Language instructed</b>
	<b>RA Armavir Region</b>		
2	Armavir, Secondary school No 10	45	Yezidi
3	Secondary school of Argavand	60	Yezidi
4	Secondary school of Yeraskhahun	109	Yezidi
5	Secondary school of Lukashin	36	Yezidi
6	Secondary school of Tandzut	85	Yezidi
7	Secondary school of Aratashen	40	Yezidi
8	Secondary school of Arshaluys	60	Yezidi
9	Basic school of Ferik	41	Yezidi
	<b>RA Ararat Region</b>		
10	Kaghtsrashen	31	Yezidi
11	Aygezard	14	Yezidi
12	Aygepat	12	Yezidi
	<b>RA Aragatsofn Marz</b>		
13	Basic school of Shamiram	94	Yezidi

14	Secondary school of Alagyaz	75	Kurdish
15	Basic school of Sadunts	30	Yezidi
16	Basic school of Avsheni	33	Kurdish
17	Secondary school of Tjartjakis	83	Kurdish
18	Basic school of Mirak	11	Yezidi
19	Basic school of Shenkani	33	Yezidi
20	Basic school of Jamshlu	22	Kurdish
21	Secondary school of Rya Taza	113	Kurdish
22	Basic school of Kaniashir	33	Yezidi
23	Secondary school of Sipan	34	Kurdish
24	Basic school of Mijnatun	34	Kurdish
25	Basic school of Otevan	0	Yezidi
26	Basic school of Arevut	17	Yezidi
27	Basic school of Kanchi	21	Yezidi
28	Basic school of Tlik	12	Yezidi
29	Basic school of Hako	17	Yezidi
30	Basic school of Ddmasar	18	Yezidi
31	Basic school of Sorik	17	Yezidi
32	Basic school of Metsadzor	11	Yezidi

**List of settlements providing instruction of Assyrian in state general education schools**

No	School	Number of children
	<b>Yerevan</b>	
1	Basic school No 8 after Pushkin	228
2	High school No 29 after A. Margaryan	11
	<b>RA Ararat Marz</b>	
3	Secondary school of V. Dvin	188
4	Secondary school of Dimitrov	20
	<b>RA Kotayk Marz</b>	
5	Secondary school of Arzni	82
	<b>RA Armavir Marz</b>	
6	Secondary school of Nor Artagers	17

**List of schools with classes of instruction of Russian  
in State general education schools**

**YEREVAN**

**Administrative district Kentron**

1. Basic school No 7 named after V. Mayakovski
2. Basic school No 8 named after A. Pushkin /with instruction of Assyrian/
3. High school No 29 named after Andranik Margaryan /with instruction of Assyrian/
4. Basic school No 55 named after A.Chekhov

**Administrative district Erebuni**

5. Basic school No 35 named after N. Gogol
6. High school No 119 named after B. Zhamkochyan

**Administrative district Nor Nork**

7. High school No 62
8. Basic school No 164 after S. Safaryan

**Administrative district Shengavit**

9. Basic school No 69 after A. Sakharov

**Administrative district Ajapnyak**

10. High school No 109
11. Basic school No 122 after Al. Blok

**Administrative district Avan**

12. Basic school No 124 after Nerses Mets

**Administrative district Kanaker-Zeytun**

13. Basic school No 147

**Administrative district Arabkir**

14. Basic school No 77 after R. Miroyan

15. Basic school No 132 named after H. Isakov

16. High school No 149 after V. Davtyan

**Administrative district Malatia-Sebastia**

17. Basic school No 176 after G. Mahari

18. High school No 184 after S. Khanzadyan

**RA ARARAT MARZ**

19. High school of Artashat

20. Secondary school of Verin Dvin village

21. Secondary school of Dimitrov village

**RA ARMAVIR MARZ**

22. High school No 4 of Armavir

23. Armavir Basic school No 5 after Zoravar Andranik Ozanyan

24. Vagharshapat High school No 5 after M. Gorki

25. Vagharshapat Basic school No 9 after R. Patkanyan

### **RA GEGHARKUNIK MARZ**

- 26. Sevan Basic school No 3 after V. Karapetyan
- 27. Sevan High school after Kh. Abovyan

### **RA LORI MARZ**

- 28. Vanadzor Basic school No 4 after A. Pushkin
- 29. Vanadzor High school No 11 after A. Griboyedov
- 30. Secondary school of Fioletovo village
- 31. Secondary school of Lermontovo village
- 32. High school of Tashir

### **RA TAVUSH MARZ**

- 33. High school of Dilijan
- 34. Basic school No 2 of Dilijan

### **RA KOTAYK MARZ**

- 35. High school No 10 of Hrazdan
- 36. Hrazdan Basic school No 12 after H. Kharonyan
- 37. High school No 4 of Abovyan

38. Abovyan Basic school No 5 after N. Vanyan
39. Secondary school of Arzni village /with instruction of Assyrian/

**RA SHIRAK MARZ**

40. High school No 2 of Gyumri
41. Basic school No 7 of Gyumri
42. Basic school No 23 of Gyumri