

## Centrist Democrat International Statement

*Condemning again the political persecution in Armenia, notably the case of Mr. Armen Ashotyan*

- Recalling our unwavering commitment to upholding the principles of democracy, rule of law, political freedom, human rights and the dignity of every single human being;
- Noting with deep concern that the state-organized large scale political persecution against prominent opposition leaders in Armenia continues;
- Acknowledging that the Armenian authorities have extended their campaign to silence the opposition by using the judiciary to fabricate criminal charges against their leaders, as is the case of Mr. Armen Ashotyan, the Vice President of the Republican Party, who has been in pre-trial detention since June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023;
- Noting with hope the fact that the European Court of Human Rights has preliminary accepted complaints in this and other similar cases, which hopefully will exert some additional pressure to the Armenian Government in control of the country's judiciary;
- Observing that on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Armenia's Corruption Appeals Court will hold yet another hearing of appeals against the illegal detention of Mr. Ashotyan which will presumably be rejected again.

*The IDC-CDI:*

- Condemns the Armenian authorities' politically-motivated persecution of opposition figures;
- Stresses the critical importance of safeguarding the principles of democracy, rule of law, political freedom and the human rights in Armenia;
- Calls upon the government to put an end to all forms of political persecution against opposition politicians and activists;
- Calls for the total independence of the judiciary as a fundamental pillar of the country's rule of law;
- Urges the international community to closely monitor the developments of this alarming situation and publicly denounce these methods of political persecution;
- Calls upon the Armenian authorities for the immediate, unconditional release of Mr. Ashotyan;
- Calls for a fair, transparent and independent judicial process, ensuring that justice prevails, in the cases of Mr. Ashotyan and so many other opposition leaders.
- Requests to forward this resolution to the relevant authority bodies in the European Union, including the Commission Vice-President and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell, urging them to take immediate action in addressing this matter.

Brussels, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024