



## Director's Message

*Our legal status imperfectly identifies us as an NGO, we view ourselves as a center for generating ideas, as a think tank. For a decade we have been doing just that, generating ideas. We have worked hard to put ideas forward without loud self-promotion or aimless activism, unswayed by torrents, and also without despair or headless optimism. For the past decade, not only have we created and been creative in collaboration with our partner organizations but we've also pushed for a paradigm shift. We have worked to educate the public opinion and the political class that there is no alternative to an increasing engagement of the community of experts into the decision-making process. And Armenia is no exception to this rule.*

*In fact, we have, on the one hand, worked hard to create our product, and on the other hand, we have also had to create the demand for our product. We have also been compelled to constantly prove that there is no single truth and, moreover, the decision-maker is not in sole possession of it. That there can be alternative options that quite frequently turn out to be extremely helpful and should, in any case, be considered.*

*After a decade, we look back at our humble contribution in the policy-making in many different areas, from regional to social, from encouraging repatriation to developing democratic institutions. The fruits of our labor are present in the laws and normative acts, in the international and domestic analytical works, in policy papers in a variety of areas, in the state and local budgets, and in the media coverage. As a rule, we are not seen but we do frequently enjoy a triumph of a particular idea. We believe that a creative proposal can always find its way, if it is above mere sentimentality, narrow interests, and is well-developed. Conversely, with the support and an extra hand from a large army of well-wishers, friends, and colleagues, we can frequently pave the way for a good proposal at different institutions.*

*The authors of truly talented ideas and initiatives are tens of thousands of people in Armenia and the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. They have braved the summer heat and the winter cold of the mountains to come to the meetings held in faraway villages and large towns in communities all over Armenia and Artsakh. They have always come in large numbers to meet with the experts from our Center and to discuss issues of importance to our nation. We have seen over and over again that the truth has deep roots in the wisdom of the people, and our complex policy proposals that are written in the political jargon are in fact deeply rooted in "people's ideas." That inspires confidence in us.*

*Our center has always been among the most active participants in the establishment of civilized relations with all neighbors and all nations and in public diplomacy. We are equally active in the day-to-day work and efforts on behalf of the army, strong government, and developing democracy.*

**Tevan Poghosyan**  
**ICHD Executive Director**

The ICHD Quarterly Newsletter is published since Spring 2010. The Newsletter is intended to improve our communications with partners in civil society, government and development community in Armenia and abroad. We hope that the Newsletter will help you stay informed about our activities and gain a better understanding of who we are and what we do.

## Project Highlights

### Off-the Record discussions

#### *The impact of the conflicts on Human Rights*

The protection of human rights minorities is a serious challenge to the establishment of democracy both in transition societies and in the European Union. The representatives of the minorities usually lack awareness of their rights and, thus, are hardly able to protect their interests and rights. Meanwhile, unrecognized entities appear in the margin of regional integration processes and do not benefit from international development opportunities. In this regard, the role of civil society institutes becomes critical, as they are at best position to raise the awareness of minorities of their rights and engage them in development processes. Twenty six representatives of the government, civil society institutions and think tanks, private businesses and development partners discussed these issues at "Human rights and Unrecognized Entities: National Minorities as Hostages to Conflicts and Political Interests" at ICHD's Off-the-Record discussion on 1 April, 2010. ICHD issued a Policy Brief based on the results of the discussion.

#### *The impact of conflicts on European Integration in the Region*

Countries of the South Caucasus have announced about their commitment to follow the track of European integration. On this track they face various obstacles or benefit from emerging opportunities. Nevertheless, the unresolved conflicts are perhaps the most critical challenge on the road to European integration. Moreover, while the sovereign states in the integration process face the conflict related challenges, the people living in unrecognized or disputed territories are often devoid of perspectives of European Integration. Twenty seven experts in this area discussed these issues during "Eu-

ropean Integration: from Perception to Initiatives” Off-the-Record discussion at ICHD on 23 April, 2010. ICHD consolidated the results of the discussion and issued a Policy Brief.

**Multilingual Secondary Education**

The initiative of the Government to amend the laws “On the Language” and “On the Secondary Education” has been extensively discussed by civil society and became a hot issue on public agenda. Various opinions and arguments have been voiced on this initiative. ICHD invited the Off-the-Record discussion trying to consolidate the policy alternatives on this matter. Twenty four representatives of the government, civil society institutions and think tanks, private businesses and development partners had an Off-the-Record discussion on the “Challenges and Possibilities of Multilingual Secondary Education” on 11 May, 2010. ICHD’s Policy Brief on this issue is available on our website.

**Regional Economic Developments**

To assess the economic situation in the region one should consider the impact of the economic crisis and Russian-Georgian war on the regional economic developments, the blocked borders, lack of adequate diplomatic relations etc. These factors, as well as the GDP of the countries are very important for the foreign investments and economic developments in the region. Twenty five experts in this area participated in ICHD’s Off-the-Record discussion on the “Realities of Armenian-Azerbaijani and Armenian-Turkish Business Relationship: Potential, Desire and Conflicts in the Region” on 12 May, 2010. The discussion was organized in the framework of the Black Sea Peace building Network. ICHD issued a Policy Brief on the results of the discussion.

**Financial guarantees for sustainability of civil society institutions**

Twenty four representatives of the government, civil society institutions and think tanks, private businesses and development partners participated in the Off-the-Record discussion on “Financial Guarantees for Sustainability of Civil Society Institutions” at ICHD on 21 May, 2010. The Policy Brief on this issue is available at ICHD’s official website.

**Town Hall Meetings**

**Armenia-NATO cooperation: voices of young women and men**

Fifty young women and men from Yeghegnadzor branch of Armenian Economic State University participated in Town Hall meeting on Armenia-NATO cooperation on 20th April 2010. ICHD and Armenian Atlantic Association (AAA) organize such discussions with young people in various regions of Armenia regularly. Young people from Yeghegnadzor voiced over 200 ideas, opinions and suggestions about the issues of Armenia-NATO cooperation. THM discussions were based on five hypothetical situations - scenarios, such as “Debris, repeating the faults”, “United Caucasus”, “Armenian rhapsody”, etc. Different scenarios helped to look at Armenia-NATO cooperation perspectives from various angles and get young peoples’ ideas and opinions on relations of our nation and one of the most powerful political and military systems of collective security in the world we live.

**ICHD experts at Turkish THM**

In the framework of ICHD’s Bridging the Divide program our experts trained Turkish partners and enhanced capacities of Town-Hall-Meeting facilitators on 12 June in Istanbul. A pilot THM on Turkey-Armenia common environmental issues was organized on 13 June, which aimed at further development of practical skills gained during the training session.



Turkish partners learn THM methodology. June 2010, Istanbul, Turkey.

**Videoconference in Gyumri, Eghegnadzor, Gavar**

Hundred fifty students of Gyumri State University, Eghegnadzor branch of Armenian State Economic University and Gavar State University participated in the videoconference with experts from UK Atlantic Council, Greek Association for Atlantic and European Cooperation organized by the Armenian Atlantic Association (AAA) in cooperation with ICHD on June 25-29, 2010. Young people have discussed with senior experts issues related to NATO, its essence and historical development, the decision-making principles in NATO, provisions of concept of NATO’s new strategy, NATO transformation and its role in contemporary foreign relations, NATO’s peace building and peace keeping activities, its enlargements and partnership with NATO, Armenia-NATO cooperation, as well as issues relating to the activities of AAA. The videoconferences aimed at raising awareness of the Armenian youth about the North-Atlantic strongest institution of security through open discussions. Since 2007 AAA



Students of Eghegnadzor branch of Armenian State Economic University at the Video Conference with NATO partners. June 2010, Yeghegnadzor, Armenia.

organizes annual education campaigns countrywide and contributes to promoting the cooperation between Armenia and NATO, especially in Armenian society through improving the comprehension and awareness raising about NATO's mission and activities in the changing global environment.

## Conferences and seminars

### *Be Strong, Stop the Violence!*

The societies cannot end the gender based violence (GBV) without men taking the active roles and responsibilities towards this end. The power relations in the South Caucasus are yet to be transformed in a way to eliminate the gender based violence from our families, offices and societies. This sounds like a long journey for war-torn patriarchal societies of the South Caucasus. However, even the longest journey starts from the first step. Thirty men from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia gathered together to make this first step to happen. The seminar "Men Talking to Men" on the role and responsibility of men in combating gender based violence organized by UNFPA on 14-18 April 2010, in Tbilisi, brought together men of various age and profession. All of them had one thing in common. They are all committed to combat violence through speaking out the problem and encouraging other men to mobilize in action against violence. The seminar was facilitated by one of the world's champions in stopping gender based violence, the cofounder of the White Ribbon movement - Dr. Michael Kaufmann - author, educator, consultant. ICHD contributed in the seminar mobilizing the beneficiaries of its project "Combating Gender-based Violence in Armenia" sponsored by the UNFPA/CGBV. Ten men, who were trained by the Consortium of Armenian organizations led by ICHD, participated in the seminar and gained the knowledge and skills on engaging men into the combat against gender based-violence. These ten men working at the Public Chamber, think tank, regional social assistance center, NGO, General Prosecutor's office: the large variety of institutions, will continue their action back home and will mobilize men's action.

### *Bridging the Divide Conference*

ICHD's Executive Director Mr. Tevan Poghosyan and Senior Associate Dr. Ashot Khurshudyan, participated in Bridging the Divide's (BTD) First Regional Conference for the Middle East and Caucasus on May 17-18, 2010 in Zahle, Lebanon. The conference provided an opportunity for organizations from Armenia, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon to discuss their efforts in promoting public policy on peace and justice in their home countries. During the meeting, BTD unveiled it's plan to create a website that will display partner organizations and allow them to receive monetary donations and exchange ideas with users. One of BTD's main goals for the conference was the creation of a mutually agreed-upon mandate that would be used to connect U.S. citizens and BTD's partner organizations in advocating peaceful policies.

### *Public perception of Armenia-NATO relations*

ICHD's Vahan Asatryan presented key findings of the analysis on the results of 10 Town Hall Meeting (THM) discussions in Yerevan and nine regions of Armenia with young women and men at the NATO/EAPC Seminar "Improving Public Perceptions on NATO Operations and Security/Defense Sector reform " in Yerevan on 16 June. The findings

revealed various aspects of young Armenians' perceptions on Armenia-NATO cooperation perspectives. The 60 pages full report is available on ICHD's website.



## ICHD in the Media

ICHD works with Armenia's leading business association and civic groups to jointly promote dialogue with Turkey

Along with ups and downs of the normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations, this issue remains a key area of focus for Armenian civil society institutes. In this critical stage of the process leading organizations strive to invest their efforts most effectively. With this purpose the leaders of the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen (Employers) of Armenia (UMB(E)A), Yerevan Press Club (YPC), "Eurasia" Partnership Foundation and International Center for Human Development (ICHD) signed Memorandum of Cooperation on Normalizing Armenian-Turkish relations on April 26, 2010, reported RFE/RL. The Memorandum aims at coordinating the objectives and efforts of the partners on improving Armenia-Turkish relations. The Executive Director of ICHD Tevan Poghosyan said at a press conference in "Armenpress" press club that the partner NGOs have rich experience in the area of normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations. Thus, the joint initiative has an essential potential for the effective development of the process. According to Armenpress UMB(E)A Chairman Arsen Ghazaryan mentioned that shaping public opinion and impact on this issue is very important: "If we do not influence the opinion of Turkish society no Turkish public opinion leaders will emerge who will bring the change in the attitudes and behaviors of Turkish political leaders. The "Purgatory" of Turks is Armenia and through us they must purge themselves and get on board of European values".

### *ICHD represented at the board of Eastern Partnership's National Platform*

The founding meeting of the National Platform of European Union's Eastern Partnership program with the participation of the 136 representatives out of 145 member organizations was held with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) on 7 June, 2010. During the meeting the board members who will coordinate the National Platform's forthcoming 6 month's works were elected. From 50 candidates 20 representatives were elected, including ICHD's Executive Director Tevan Poghosyan reported Armedia News Agency.

### *ICHD launched new publication "The Resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh Issue: What Societies Say?"*

ICHD launched its new publication titled "The Resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh Issue: What Societies Say" on 28 June 2010, reported Panorama News Agency. The book provides the comparative analysis of citizens' ideas and opinions voiced at Town Hall Meetings (THM) organized in communities of Armenia (10), Azerbaijan (10) and Nagorno-Karabakh (3). The THM discussions were organized by the ICHD

and Youth for Development (YFD, Azerbaijan) with the support of British Embassy in Armenia and financed through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to Armenia Charles Lonsdale welcomed the new publication in his opening remarks. ICHD's Executive Director Tevan Poghosyan stated that the public opinions presented in the book can be useful for analysts, experts, as well as for decision makers. ICHD's Ashot Khurshudyan guided on using the book in his key note. According to the Permanent Representative of Nagorno Karabakh Republic in Armenia Karlen Avetisyan an environment should be enabled to organize tête-à-tête discussions and exchange of ideas of societies in conflict in NKR, Armenia or Azerbaijan.

***ICHD will work on the national program on combating gender-based violence***

A working group on "National Program on Combating Gender Based Violence in Armenia in 2011-2014 " was created with the decision of the Interagency Commission on Combating Gender Based Violence in Armenia on June 17. ICHD representative Vahan Asatryan was elected as a member of the working group as mentions the official website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia.

***ICHD celebrated its 10th anniversary***

On the eve of the Day of the Republic the International Center for Human Development celebrated its 10th anniversary with hundreds of its partners on May 27, 2010. Forty partners of the Center have received awards and certificates for productive cooperation. The book consolidating the decade long work of the Center has been presented to the guests of the event.



Anniversary Candles. February 2010, Yerevan.

**More about ICHD ▶**

Established in March 2000 in Yerevan, the International Center for Human Development (ICHD or the Center) is a leading think tank in the South Caucasus that brings together a team of highly-qualified analysts and researchers with strong academic background and substantial experience in both public and private sectors committed to professional excellence and ethics. We cultivate a culture of inclusive policy making process, develop and introduce innovative instruments effective in the regional, national and local policy environments.

ICHD provides quality advice, policy analysis and development services to our stakeholders including government, civil society, the private sector and development partners, creating innovative policy communication tools and promoting adaptive environment for dialogue. We also champion development and introduction of new technologies used for effective participation of citizens in decision-making. Over the past decade ICHD became a center of excellence and knowledge in a broader region and internationally recognized as a credible and attractive partner.

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