



YERKIR

Union of NGO for Repatriation and Settlement
Union d'ONG pour le Rapatriement et la Réinsertion
Союз общественных организаций «Еркир» по репатриации и освоению
Հայրենադարձության եւ հիմնավորման կազմակերպությունների միություն

Press-release
June 23, 2010

GEORGIAN FRONTIER GUARDS DIDN'T ALLOW YERKIR UNION CHAIRMAN, SEVAK ARTSRUNI, INTO GEORGIA

On March 19, 2010, the Coordination Council for the Protection of the Rights of the Javakheti Armenians issued an open letter to the U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Ms. Marie Yovanovitch. The letter highlighted the parts of the U.S. State Department report on human rights 2010 on the problems of Javakheti Armenians and the case of the Javakheti-based Armenian political activist and political prisoner Vahagn Chakhalyan.

The U.S. Embassy to Armenia handed the open letter to the U.S. Embassy to Georgia. On May 17 the representatives of the Coordinating Council were invited to the U.S. Embassy to Armenia where the answer of the U.S. ambassador to Georgia was handed over to them. Mr. John Bass invited the representatives of the Council to Tbilisi to discuss the problems of Armenians of Javakheti.

On June 21, 2010 Sevak Arstruni (Chairman of NGO "Yerkir Union", member of Coordination Council) and Robert Tatoyan left for Tbilisi to meet with Ms. Julie Fisher, head of the political and economic department of the U.S. Embassy. However, at the border crossing point the Georgian border guards did not allow Sevak Artsruni to cross the border. Only Robert Tatoyan participated in the meeting at the U.S. Embassy who presented the details of the incident, as well as handed over the letter of the Coordinating Council addressed to the U.S. government to mediate the dialogue with the Georgian government to solve the problems of Javakheti and release of Vahagn Chakhalyan.

It is necessary to mention that Shirak Torosyan, who is a member of the Armenian parliament and the Coordinating Council was also invited to the meeting on June 21, however the Georgian government had informed beforehand that they would not allow him cross the border.

The Coordination Council for the Protection of the Rights of the Javakheti Armenians evaluates this as a pre-planned attempt of the Georgian government to hinder the meeting at the U.S. embassy. We announce that steps will be taken to handle this incident.

The Coordination Council for the Protection of the Rights of the Javakheti Armenians