

MCA-Armenia Program
Stakeholders' Committee Meeting Minutes
August 4, 2009
At 15:00 p.m., MCA-Armenia Office

Minutes N 15

The meeting was attended by the following SC members:

<i>Lilit Asatryan</i>	“Young Women Association of Armenia” NGO
<i>Karen Zadoyan</i>	“Armenian Young Lawyers’ Association” NGO
<i>Lia Khachatryan</i>	“Integration and Development” NGO
<i>Galstyan Karen, Narine Mailyan’s alternate</i>	“Small and Medium Businesses Foundation” NGO
<i>Arman Voskanyan</i>	“Tavush Development” NGO
<i>Karine Movsisyan</i>	“Goris Youth Association” NGO
<i>Aleksandr Ter-Hovakimyan</i>	“Armenian Student-Doctors’ Scientific Association” NGO
<i>Norayr Danielyan, Viktor Engibaryan’s alternate</i>	“European Movement of Armenia” NGO
<i>Poghos Shahinyan</i>	“National Road Safety Council” NGO
<i>Ashot Hovsepyan, Mihran Hovhannisyan’s alternate</i>	“Eghvard” WUA
<i>Hazarapet Nazaryan</i>	“Eghegnadzor” WUA
<i>Sasun Hambartsumyan</i>	“Civil Servants’ Association” NGO
<i>In the absence of:</i>	
<i>Andranik Veranyan</i>	“Noyemberyan Communities’ Union” LEU
<i>Tonakan Ghazaryan</i>	“Shenik” WUA
<i>Shirak Mikayelyan</i>	“Work and Motherland” NGO
<i>With the participation of: Ara Hovsepyan Victoria Grigoryan Gayane Harutyunyan</i>	MCA-Armenia SNCO CEO Stakeholders’ Committee Assistant Office Manager, MCC Armenia

In accordance with Clause 3.12 of SC Bylaws (SC meetings are chaired by SC members based on rotation principle and alphabetic order of SC members’ names) the meeting was chaired by Arman Voskanyan.

The Chairman suggested approving the Agenda submitted in advance.

1. 15:00 – Discussion of SC members’ election procedure

Members of SC Bylaws Committee K. Zadoyan, L. Khachatryan, A. Ter-Hovakimyan, P. Shahinyan

2. 15:30 – Clarification of the schedule of the SC elections and the upcoming activities
3. 16:00 – Discussion of Draft SC Report
Members responsible for SC Report: L. Asatryan, A. Veranyan, A. Voskanyan, V. Engibaryan
4. 16:30 – Other issues

The Agenda was approved unanimously.

First item of the Agenda

K. Zadoyan spoke on the first item of the Agenda. He stated that the Workgroup on the Bylaws issues has discussed the procedure of the SC members' elections and arrived at the conclusion that the previously applied principle to hold a General Assembly for interested organizations isn't fully justified. K. Zadoyan clarified that holding such a meeting is not required by any of the administrative documents of MCA-Armenia Program. For example, the Compact states the necessity to hold meeting(s) where the SC members should be elected. Another argument is that the SC has received a one-year mandate from its electorate, i.e. more than 400 non-governmental organizations, while the General Assembly of the Interested Organizations is a body lacking any mandate. In this respect K. Zadoyan, in the name of all the members of the Workgroup on Bylaws issues, proposed removing the part of holding a General Assembly for interested organizations and delegating its main functions, i.e. approving the elections procedure and appointing the Election Committee members, to the SC. On the other hand, to ensure the participation of the civil society, it was suggested to hold public discussions regarding the election procedure and to appoint Election Committee members through an open bid. In case if the SC majority is for the presented approach, the workgroup will develop the Elections Procedure Draft by the upcoming SC meeting.

Workgroup member A. Ter-Hovakimyan also expressed his opinion. He stated that SC is a body authorised by the public sector which can organize the elections procedure, applying all appropriate mechanisms necessary to ensure its transparency (hold public hearing of Bylaws, except the representation of SC members in the Election Committee, etc).

Program CEO Ara Hovsepyan also spoke on the issue. He stated that the concept of General Assembly of Interested Organizations initiated at the times of the first commission when the mechanisms of the election of SC members weren't so clear. True, the program's main documents do not require holding any such meeting. Still, it is the Stakeholders' Committee who is the decision-maker in main approaches concerning the SC members' elections, whereas the SNCO has to ensure that the elections are independent, fair and transparent.

Chairman A. Voskanyan raised an issue on the possible format of elections of the Election Committee members. The workgroup members replied that it would be possible to hold the election through an open bid.

A common discussion was held around the above mentioned. The main opinions expressed during the discussion are presented below:

SC member L. Asatryan addressed for several times the SC members urging them to preserve the General Assembly of Interested Organizations. She justified her viewpoint with the following

arguments: the assembly may serve SC as a reporting meeting during which the elections of the Election Committee members may alternatively be organized; holding them in any other way may be regarded as non-democratic and non-public.

SC member P. Shahinyan shared L. Asatryan's opinion regarding the convening of the General Assembly with the purpose to elect members for the Election Committee.

K. Movsisyan on the whole supported the idea of holding the General Assembly as she thought it would ensure publicity and involve interested parties in the process. At the same time, she would equally support the SC in its decision to abstain from holding such a meeting.

In the result of discussion the following suggestions were put to vote:

1. Not to hold the General Assembly and leave its functions to the SC.
Pro: 4 votes (K. Zadoyan, A. Ter-Hovakimyan, L. Khachatryan, K. Galstyan), Cons: 2 votes (L. Asatryan, P. Shahinyan), Abstain: 5 votes (A. Voskanyan, H. Nazaryan, A. Hovsepyan, S. Hambardzumyan, K. Movsisyan).
2. To preserve the principle of holding the General Assembly with the purpose to select Election Committee members and present the SC report.
Pro: 5 votes (L. Asatryan, P. Shahinyan, K. Movsisyan, H. Nazaryan, A. Hovsepyan), Cons: 1 vote (K. Zadoyan), Abstain: 5 votes (A. Ter-Hovakimyan, L. Khachatryan, K. Galstyan, A. Voskanyan, S. Hambardzumyan)

Thus, in the result of voting it was decided to preserve the General Assembly in the SC Elections Procedure.

Members of the Committee on Bylaws issues K. Zadoyan and A. Ter-Hovakimyan renounced developing the Elections Procedure, justifying their decision by their principled approach towards the matter.

Program CEO A. Hovsepyan expressed his concern about the lack of completeness in the final decision; on the one hand the decision allows holding a General Assembly, on the other hand it decreases its authority. In A. Hovsepyan's opinion, one of the two options is to be chosen; either leave the Elections Procedure as it is (despite being time-consuming it is a tested mechanism) or leave the organization process of the elections wholly to the SC, while the SNCO will take charge of the technical issues.

A. Hovsepyan asked SC members to proceed with the discussion around the issue and arrive at a final and a comprehensive decision in terms of its benefit to the program.

A discussion was held, which gave the SC members another opportunity to express their viewpoints concerning the issue.

Workgroup members K. Zadoyan and A. Ter-Hovakimyan stood their ground; there is no necessity to hold such a meeting since this body lacks a mandate in the legal field. One shouldn't stick to the past experience of holding meetings, since it was the present SC Commission that developed the complete SC Bylaws and put it into use.

SC members L. Asatryan and P. Shahinyan stuck to their opinion that the General Assembly should be preserved: the mechanisms of electing Election Committee members aren't clear enough

and the procedure grows more closed and complicated.

There was a suggestion to cancel the results of the previous SC voting results in order to clarify the final decision of the SC members. The suggestion was put to vote and approved by 7 votes pro (K. Zadoyan, A. Ter-Hovakimyan, L. Khachatryan, K. Galstyan, A. Voskanyan, S. Hambardzumyan, K. Movsisyan) 0 votes abstain and 4 votes cons (L. Asatryan, P. Shahinyan, H. Nazaryan, A. Hovsepyan).

In the result of discussion the Chairman presented 3 suggestions for voting:

1. Not to hold General Assembly of Interested Organizations, delegating its authority to SC:
7 votes pro (K. Zadoyan, A. Ter-Hovakimyan, L. Khachatryan, K. Galstyan, A. Voskanyan, S. Hambardzumyan H. Nazaryan), 1 vote Cons (L. Asatryan), 3 votes Abstain (P. Shahinyan, K. Movsisyan, A. Hovsepyan)
2. Leave the previous SC Elections Procedure as it is:
0 votes Pro, 3 votes Cons (K. Zadoyan, A. Ter-Hovakimyan, L. Khachatryan), 8 votes Abstain (L. Asatryan, P. Shahinyan, H. Nazaryan, A. Hovsepyan, K. Galstyan, A. Voskanyan, S. Hambardzumyan, K. Movsisyan)
3. To preserve the principle of the General Assembly solely with the authority to select the Election Committee members:
4 votes Pro (L. Asatryan, P. Shahinyan, A. Hovsepyan, K. Movsisyan), 4 votes Cons (K. Zadoyan, A. Ter-Hovakimyan, L. Khachatryan, K. Galstyan), 3 votes Abstain (H. Nazaryan, A. Voskanyan, S. Hambardzumyan).

Thus, in the result of voting preference was given to the first option: withdraw the General Assembly and delegate its authority wholly to the SC. It was also assigned that the members of the Workgroup on Bylaws issues should accordingly develop the Draft Bylaws after additionally discussing it with the SC members at the upcoming meeting.

K. Zadoyan suggested reducing the number of the SC members from 15 to 11 due to the fact of program rescoping.

SC member L. Asatryan objected to the above mentioned suggestion.

The Chairman suggested delaying new suggestions and discussions until the upcoming SC meeting.

It was suggested that the members of the Workgroup on Bylaws issues should develop the Draft Bylaws by the end of the upcoming week and present it for the SC discussion.

It was decided to convene the regular upcoming meeting on August 12, at 16:00.

Chairman: A. Voskanyan

Secretary: V. Grigoryan

August 4, 2009