**Submissions for a report on child, early and forced marriage for the Office of the High Commissioner**

**The Office of the Human Rights defender of Armenia**

**2018 August**

The Human Rights Defender Office of the Republic of Armenia doesn't have any information on forced marriages concerning to children in humanitarian settings. In recent years Armenia accepted many refugees from Iraq, Syria and other countries mostly of Armenian origin who do not usually practice early marriages. However, the issue is still important as there are cases of child marriages in Yezidi communities in Armenia.

In 2013 The Child Rights Committee noted in its concluding observations about Armenia that girls in the Yezidi community are often married before the legal age of marriage in a traditional ceremony and recommended to fully enforce the age of marriage set out in law for all forms of marriage, develop and undertake comprehensive awareness-raising programs on the negative implications of early marriage for the girl child’s rights to health, education and development, targeting in particular parents and community leaders.

In the Republic of Armenia, legal regulation on marriage, as well as the procedure and conditions for registration of marriage are laid down in the RA Constitution and RA Family Code. Hence, according to Article 34, RA Constitution, a woman and a man having attainted the marriageable age shall have the right to marry and form a family with free expression of their will. The marriageable age and the procedure for marriage and divorce shall be prescribed by law. According to Article 10, RA Family Code, entering into marriage requires the mutual voluntary consent of a man and a woman and attaining the marital age, except for the cases stated in Part 2 of the Article. A person may also get married at the age of 17 by consent of his/her parents, adoptive parents or guardians. A person may also get married at the age of 16 by consent of his/her parents, adoptive parents or guardians and if the other spouse has attained at least the age of 18. As for marriages of the female representatives of the Yezidi community, while based on certain socio-ethnic peculiarities, such cases may be found, they are latent in nature, mostly in factual marital relations, without registration with the Civil Acts Registration Service, as defined by the RA legislation. Nevertheless, the regulations of the RA legislation are also applied in formal terms to girls from Yezidi community.

Taking into account the above-mentioned the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia suggested to the Government to carry out large-scale and accessible awareness campaigns and actions on the requirements of the RA legislation and peculiarities of their enforcement targeting representatives of various socio-ethnic communities or groups, prevent early marriages among adolescents, hold awareness-raising and professional trainings for school students and teaching staff.