

**The input of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia for the report of  
the SR on slavery to the 79th session of the GA.**

**Answers to key questions:**

The Republic of Armenia recognizes the right to freedom of association as a constitutional right. It is detailed in the Law on Trade Unions. In case of breaches, concerns should be addressed to the Civil or Administrative Court or to the Health and Labor Inspection body. There is no dedicated labor court, which complicates and prolongs the trial process due to the workload of the judicial system. The criminal code also stipulates punishments for obstructing the exercise of the right to form an association (social and trade unions) or the legal activity of an association (social and trade unions).

The Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia (CTUA) consistently raises awareness about any violations of the right to freedom of association before the Government, the International Labor Organization, and other international organizations.

Regarding the right to collective bargaining, it is defined in the Labor Code and the Law on Trade Unions. The procedures for implementing these rights are detailed in the Labor Code. According to the Labor Code, the party expressing a desire for collective bargaining must notify the other party in writing. The notice should state the purpose of the collective bargaining as well as recommendations and demands. The party receiving the notification about the holding of collective bargaining must inform the party expressing a desire for collective negotiations about its position to participate in collective bargaining within 7 days. It should be noted that there is non-compliance with the Law on Trade Unions, which stipulates that the employer must ensure the conduct of collective bargaining with the trade union uniting his employees no later than within seven days. Even in these two cases, if the employer's position is negative or if the employer does not ensure collective bargaining, trade unions should declare the strike.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to go on strike due to the high requirements and lengthy procedures defined by the Labor Code.

According to Article 35 of the Labor Code, non-state control over the implementation of labor legislation, other normative legal acts containing norms of labor law, and collective agreements by employers is carried out by trade unions. Trade unions have the right to control workplaces where their members are working. Armenian legislation does not define the right for trade unions to enter the accommodation provided by the employer to conduct non-state control.

According to Armenian legislation, membership of a trade union requires the existence of a labor contract. If workers do not have labor contracts, they cannot establish or join trade unions. The CTUA is concerned with the labor rights of migrants and informal workers. Last year, we have seen many migrants from India working in the informal economy. The CTUA pays attention to the implementation of labor rights for each worker; therefore, the CTUA has 3 important committees: Standing committee on workers' socio-economic, labor protection, and ecology issues; Standing committee on equality in labor relations; Standing committee on youth issues.

Armenia has ratified ILO Conventions № 29, 87, 98, 105, 138, 182, except ILO Convention № 189 on Domestic work. The Labor Code of Armenia defines domestic work, which does not correspond to the definition of the Convention. According to Article 98 of the Labor Code, domestic workers are those persons who perform work at home under a labor contract with materials, tools, and equipment provided by the employer or purchased at their own expense. This resembles remote work. Additionally, it is important to note that Article 106.1 of the Labor Code defines provisions on the regulation of remote work. There is a lack of regulation on domestic work in the context of the Convention in Armenia, which can violate labor rights and the concept of decent work.

According to Decree N 760-U dated August 18, 2015, of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, the CTUA (by its agreement) is a member of the working group of the Council on the fight against human trafficking and exploitation in the Republic of Armenia. A representative of CTUA participates in the meetings of this working group.

The CTUA raises awareness about forced labor among its members during the trainings conducted by CTUA.

The CTUA has 18 affiliated sectorial unions (<https://hamk.am/en/branches>). Some sectorial unions unite workers with higher risks of labor and/or sexual exploitation:

1. Branch republican trade union organizations of workers of agroindustrial division of the Republic of Armenia,
2. Republican Union of Trade Union Organizations of Health Workers of Armenia,
3. The Republican Branch Union of Trade Union Organizations of Industry Workers of Armenia,
4. Republican Branch Union of Trade Union Organizations of Light Industry Workers of Armenia,
5. Branch Republican Union of Professional Organizations of Construction and Building Materials Industry Workers of Armenia,
6. Branch Republican Union of Professional Organizations of Service Sector, Food, and Fishing Industry Workers of Armenia,
7. Employees Trade Union Organizations and Municipal Economy and Public Utilities of the Republic of Armenia.

Challenges and limitations for trade unions:

1. Social partnership: Lack social partners with whom sectorial unions can bring issues to the discussion table.
2. Skills and tools to work with migrants.
3. Requirement of a labor contract for the membership of trade unions.

Recommendations to stakeholders to enable workers' organizations to more effectively prevent and address contemporary forms of slavery in Armenia:

- Offer training programs for workers' organizations to identify, prevent, and address modern slavery effectively.

- Provide resources for capacity building within workers' organizations to enhance their ability to support and advocate for affected workers.

- Foster partnerships between workers' organizations, governments, businesses, and civil society groups to share information and coordinate efforts in combating modern slavery.

- Provide training and capacity-building programs for workers' organizations, especially from high risk sector, to enhance their understanding of contemporary forms of slavery.