

PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA



2017-2022

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VISION AND GOALS OF THE RA GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME

The RA Government presents the programme for activities that will guarantee the country's sustainable development in the period between 2017 and 2022 with a focus on large-scale reforms. It builds upon the message of the President of the Republic of Armenia, on the election programmes of the Republican Party of Armenia and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the principles of the Coalition Memorandum, as well as the advanced ideas circulated in the broader society.

The Programme is focused on providing substantial, and at the same institutional and perspective solutions to the diagnostics that have been widely discussed in the society and were published by the RA Government in early 2017. The RA Government aims to ensure that our country's security, along with economic progress necessary for a successful solution to this top priority issue is achieved by reflecting it both in the short-term and medium-term perspectives.

The Programme is focused on achieving peace bolstered with strong defence, inclusive growth for all segments of the society and active engagement of all Armenian citizens in the public life: Armenia should become the centre for consolidation of all Armenians, their potential and capacities, as well as the centre for them to use their connections and realise their full potential. The reforms envisaged in this Programme are Armenian citizen-centred, and the proactive and effective engagement of citizens in the proposed reforms is the guarantee of the Programme's success. These reforms should ensure that there are sustainable guarantees in order to for continuously expand the opportunities for and the capacity of citizens of the Republic of Armenia to live a good life.

Exercising such rights could only be effectively realised within an effective legal and constitutional framework. In this regard, it is more than important to support the smooth transition to the parliamentary system of governance enshrined in the

Constitution. The RA Government will exert all efforts to create the legal basis ensuring the efficiency of public administration in the parliamentary system, the authorities' responsibility and accountability to the public, and the rule of law.

The vision of the RA Government is based on the following principle: we must have a safe, fair, free and smart Armenia.

Armenia is a land-locked country, and out of four borders, it has only two open borders. Our country faces regional challenges threatening our security. In this context, it is crucial to formulate sustainable legal, political and military guarantees for secure development of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh. We face the challenges of protecting our borders and, in the meantime, promoting ties with the two friendly neighbouring states. Under these circumstances, we should continue to enhance our military capacity by ensuring combat readiness, ongoing enhancement and simultaneous modernisation of the RA Armed Forces, as well as modern arms.

The Republic of Armenia should implement high-class diplomacy by developing and strengthening its ties with interested states, by strengthening its political and economic ties and increasing the number of allies and partner countries.

In parallel, the RA Government should focus on the solution of domestic issues and on the opportunities to improve social welfare by highlighting the importance of ensuring the quality of life of families in our country and the perspectives for a dignified life for the future generation, including access to education, healthcare and employment.

In the context of Armenia's security, the RA Government attaches importance to the efficient and transparent use of natural resources and maximising the profits of the state in that sector as these are highly important factors for the security of both today's generation and the future generations.

The RA Government will continue the active policy focused on ensuring Armenia's energy security and realisation of the country's significant potential in regional energy projects. Special attention will be paid to increasing alternative sources of energy and energy efficiency.

Our country's development should be aimed at overcoming the challenges that Armenia faces today. To this end, firstly, the RA Government is committed to increase and strengthen the atmosphere of trust and justice in the society. To achieve this, we have initiated reforms with the objective of enhancing managerial capacities and approaches within public administration authorities and local governments and public administration institutions and improve their quality by making the latter more efficient, human-centred, transparent and inclusive, as well as increase the accountability of these bodies and institutions to the public.

Armenia will underpin creations and inventions only if an effective competitive environment is ensured. Only such an environment would enable to attract investments for creating quality jobs.

We have no other way to succeed than to ensure that everyone is confident in their ability to unleash their potential in Armenia. Each entrepreneur should be confident that the principle “everyone can pursue the same economic objective, as someone else” will be applied, and that a fair and sound competitive environment will be inevitable.

The judicial system is one of the most important guarantors of justice in the country. The RA Government will carry out comprehensive measures aimed at guaranteeing its independence and impartiality for securing effective and predictable justice. We should aspire to reach a situation where any person having a legal dispute will be confident that a just and impartial solution will be provided to their problems through Armenia's judicial system.

Corruption is the greatest evil that we have to combat through all possible and legal means. The RA Government, within its powers, will take measures to ensure that the anti-corruption institutional framework is developed and fully operational to support the feedback between the authorities and the public and public oversight.

In the area of social protection, a transition will be made to a new policy with the main objective of addressing the root causes of social injustice and non-targeted support and implementing projects focused on their neutralisation and prevention. In parallel, targeted social assistance to truly needy groups will be expanded.

Free of charge services, including medical care, will be provided only based on the principle of social justice. In the meantime, the RA Government should stand by each person in need of emergency care.

The philosophy and the format behind the development of our country need new impetuses and initiatives. “Smart” should be the idea underlying Armenia’s development. The Armenian economy should grow through a labour force that is modern, globally competitive, highly qualified, educated, motivated and mobile. The RA Government will review the current educational system at all levels in order to arm the public with knowledge and skills that will be critical in the decades to come.

In the context of the current global challenges there is no alternative to having a smart and innovative economy. The underlying principle of smart management is to achieve maximum results with the existing resources. Human capital development is of primary importance for attaining our vision of smart development. With this development imperative, education sector reforms should not only address the current issues, but also ensure that we have competitive and creative human resources both for the present and the future.

Over the next five years, Armenia’s economic growth will be based on the efficient and smart use of domestic economic resources and improvement of its competitiveness in the world by attaining a gradual increase in exports which will be the key driver for

the growth.

The continued growth in productivity and constant use of new technologies are important for a competitive national economy and for achieving high rates of economic growth. To have a competitive and innovative economy, the RA Government will develop and implement Armenia's digital agenda that will serve as a basis for economic overhaul and viability. The digital agenda will encompass almost all spheres of our life — the public sector, infrastructure, economy and jobs, social life, education, science, research, culture, security and integration processes with Armenia's participation.

The activities in the business environment should be based on modern practical knowledge and management skills. The business ecosystem has to be upgraded to encourage the creation of new jobs and promote the development and introduction of innovations along with the wide use of innovative technologies in the economy for increased productivity. Our businesses have to be flexible and advanced by constantly adapting to the rapidly changing global environment and imperatives. The business environment in our country should ensure a competitive and friendly ecosystem and a level playing field; it should be attractive for both local business people and foreign investors.

More than 7 million Armenians live outside Armenia and are spread all over the world. Our objective is to find a formula to foster stronger ties between Diaspora Armenians and their homeland that would enable us to preserve the identity of Armenians and make Armenia a centre contributing to Armenians, which unites all Armenians all over the world.

Armenia and the Diaspora are two parts of the whole — interlinked with one chain of history, sharing one destiny and concerned about the future of the homeland. We bear responsibility towards each other, which goes to show that we have to combine forces, multiply our potential and strengthen our position in the world arena.

We should create an environment for managers of different sectors, cultural figures who live in the Diaspora, our compatriots who are internationally recognised in the fields of education and science to take part in the reforms that are underway in our country in order to introduce a new management culture and the knowledge and potential of our best experts of the Diaspora serving pan-Armenian objectives.

National culture is one of the crucial ways of consolidating Armenians. We have to assert that our rich cultural heritage and strong national identity underlie the nation's independent self-determination and guarantee the longevity of our homeland.

Through the implementation of this Programme, during 2017-2022, the RA Government sets the following goals:

- To ensure faster economic growth as compared to developed countries by achieving approximately an average of 5 percent GDP growth;
- To achieve a significant growth in exports with the exports of goods and services reaching 40-45 percent as a share of GDP;
- To achieve poverty reduction by lowering it by 12 percentage points;
- To achieve 25 percent increase in nominal minimum salaries by optimally combining employment growth and compensation for dignified jobs and, taking into account structural unemployment and risks of reduction in the country's competitiveness, the proportion of the mitigating minimum wage and median wage.

The performance indicators for measures provided for in the RA Government Programme identify the targets that the activities of the RA Government would aim to achieve during the upcoming 5 years. The measures will be implemented in an environment of diverse constraints. Thus, in each period, depending on what can be afforded, out of the measures indicated in the Programme those assessed as higher priorities will be reflected in state medium-term expenditure frameworks and state budgets.

SECTORAL REFORMS

1. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. MODERNISATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Modernisation of the public administration and local self-government system in the Republic of Armenia has been and continues to be an area of focus for the RA Government. Such modernisation is driven by both Constitutional reforms and the imperative to empower the current administration system with an ability to respond to the challenges we face in a timely and effective manner. Current developments tend to make public administration more flexible, efficient, less costly and human-centred; also, project management mechanisms and technologies are being introduced in some areas of public administration. The RA Government has already started optimising the public administration system and implementing activities in order to change the methods of working, which will be one of the targets of the activities of the RA Government in the upcoming five years.

At this stage of implementation of Constitutional reforms, importance is attached to envisaging proper legal bases for developing an effective administration system. To this end, the RA Government will develop a draft Law on the RA Government and the package of related laws. The RA Government will also continue supporting the Constitutional reforms through the legislation by drafting the laws and secondary regulatory legal acts in accordance with the Constitution.

The other priority for the RA Government is the digitisation of the state government and local self-government systems. This refers to both introduction and enhancement of information collection, exchange and analysis systems and mechanisms both within the public administration system and digitisation and electronic rendering of services to citizens and businesses by public authorities.

Due to favourable conditions created in electronic governance and with a view to increasing the quality, access to and the level of efficiency of services delivered to

citizens and the business sector, the RA Government will promote the delivery of public services electronically.

The system of unified platforms for the rendering of state services introduced by the RA Government will be enhanced by introducing additional services and significantly increasing the number and the level of accessibility of unified platforms. Reforms to be carried out in the area of rendering state services will enable access to “one-stop-shop” services without a need to visit other agencies. Preventing corruption is critically important for guaranteeing the country’s security and stability. Corruption endangers human rights protection, undermines democratic values, impedes establishment of the rule of law, and disrupts the normal development of the economy. With a view to overcoming corruption, steps should be taken to embed intolerance to corruption and a tough anti-corruption policy by developing and implementing strategies, introducing and developing a new institutional anti-corruption system, generally preventing corruption and creating an environment of inevitability of responsibility. The fight against corruption should focus on higher-risk areas and phenomena causing major harm.

1. In the area of public sector modernisation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) increase the official powers of the members of the RA Government ensuring that the sector entrusted to them is managed effectively, and introduce responsibility commensurate to it;
 - (2) for all republican executive authorities define the focus of performance and rate them and introduce a new procedure for evaluating the efficiency of the activities of the territorial administration bodies;
 - (3) identify and abolish excessive procedures for and layers of service delivery to citizens by public administration authorities, which contain minimum corruption risks and minimise undue interface with public authorities in routine life;

- (4) increase the level of accountability and transparency of public authorities, as well as improve the effective feedback between them and citizens and businesses;
 - (5) reduce public administration system costs based on the need for the functions performed and actual performance;
 - (6) eliminate duplications or inefficient functions of public authorities;
 - (7) expand the system for providing “one-stop-shop” services to citizens and investors for improving the quality of services and using the existing platforms and also engage private entities as service providers;
 - (8) introduce new criteria for evaluation of the professional capabilities and performance evaluation of job responsibilities of public servants based on the imperative to drastically change the image of a public servant.
2. In the area of developing the digital system, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017:
 - a. create a professional framework which, based on a unified vision, will coordinate the state administration and local self-government electronic systems development;
 - b. establish an interoperability platform between the state and local ICT systems, which would create conditions precedent for entering any information into the system of state or local self-governments only once and creating access for all authorised users;
 - c. continue the activities of introducing management information systems within all consolidated communities and five cities;
 - d. develop and test model information systems for communities;

(2) by the end of 2018:

- a. develop and adopt a general digital strategy (digital agenda) that would outline the strategy of the RA Government in digitisation and future steps;
- b. transition to unified access and identification of systems introduced within all government agencies;

(3) during 2018-2019 make the unified electronic platform of the Hotline of ministries fully operational;

(4) by the end of 2019:

- a. create a unified electronic platform for inquiries aimed at introducing an efficient electronic management tool for responding to citizen inquiries and requests addressed to public authorities. Combine the unified electronic platform with the Mulberry electronic data management system.

(5) by the end of 2020:

- a. increase the number of electronic services provided;
- b. develop and introduce an integrated electronic system of public administration.

1.2. TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

The climate and environmental conditions of Armenia's regions, unequal distribution of production capacities and natural resources, differences in economic development, social, demographic and cultural differences have resulted in disparities in the levels of development of territorial units and in a need for developing actions aimed at mitigating regional disparities.

Implementation of local self-government system reforms and the power decentralisation policy should continue aiming to expand the coverage and improve

the quality of services rendered to the population within the local self-government system.

Marz and municipal investment project implementation has been developed and initiated in the Republic with the aim to reduce disparities in the socio-economic development of marzes and communities and should continue.

Under the Clean Armenia project for the solution of current problems in the area of garbage disposal in the Republic, a package of legislative reforms has been developed along with an action plan, by adoption and consistent implementation of which we will soon have a diametrically different reality in the territory of Armenia compared to the current state of garbage disposal.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In the area of territorial administration, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) develop and implement marz strategies and operational plans, in the context of marz and municipal development programmes targeted at the socio-economic development of marzes funded by public and other sources, assess the impact and effectiveness of policies developed by the RA Government, namely:
 - a. by the end of 2017, adopt the RA Marz Development Strategies for 2017-2025 and the first Operational Plan, attaching importance to public-community-private partnership arrangements;
 - b. by the end of 2017, for the purposes of implementing Marz Operational Plans, introduce the Marz Development Fund scheme (MDF), raise the funds from the state budget, grants and other sources through which part of the operational plans of marzes will be financed;

- c. by the end of 2017, carry out joint projects in marzes with EU and UNDP (support to Marz Development Projects (EU projects — Support to Consolidated Communities — 4, and Pilot Regional Development Programme /PRDP/ — 7) for ensuring their economic development; UNDP Project: Integrated Support to Rural Development, implementation of the Project within borderline communities in Tavush Marz);
 - (2) by the end of 2017, develop the concept paper for territorial administration, setting forth substantive changes in territorial administration and redefining the mission of territorial administration bodies;
 - (3) during 2018-2022, continue the implementation of social and economic support projects within borderline communities.
2. In the area of local self-governance, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2019, continue administrative and territorial reforms, complete the process of community consolidation. In order to guarantee the success of reforms in this direction, the following measures are planned to be undertaken:
 - a. during 2017-2019, continue the administrative and territorial reforms, complete the process of community consolidation;
 - b. during 2017-2022, create intercommunity unions, and introduce different forms of intercommunity co-operation:
 - develop the regular intra-community passenger transport in parallel to the consolidation process;
 - by the end of 2017, define and introduce clear criteria for rendering service to improve the quality of service rendered by communities, outsource community services to private enterprises within the scope of community-private sector partnership.

- c. expand the powers of local self-government bodies, particularly in the areas of disaster risk reduction and response, veterinary, phytosanitary services, primary healthcare, improve the quality of pre-school and elementary education in rural areas through resource pooling and introduction of new mechanisms;
 - d. by the end of 2018, develop and introduce an electronic data system regarding communities, introduce a complete community management information system, create an on-line system for local tax databases and the payment of taxes;
- (2) the main objective of municipal budget formulation and municipal financial management reforms is to use programme budgeting and strengthen the links between the budgets and five-year development programmes of communities, to consistently increase the share of community's own revenue in the total revenue and finalise the multi-factor financial equalisation system. In particular, it is planned to:
- a. during 2017-2022, gradually introduce programme budgeting for defining the vision of the community, sectoral (programme) objectives, final outcomes, plans and measures;
 - b. during 2017-2022, consistently increase the share of own revenue in the total revenue of the community by improving the collection discipline, introducing new paid services as well as collecting other potential new revenue;
 - c. starting from 2018, make a transition to a new policy on provision of subventions; competitive provision of subventions to communities having presented the best programmes;
 - d. starting from 2019, fully implement the multifactor system of financial equalisation.

3. In the area of business development — for promoting investment and operational plans targeted at socioeconomic development, improving the livelihoods and creating jobs within communities and for their effective implementation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop clear criteria for investment projects and determine the scope of public aid based on the appraisal using such criteria;
 - (2) for the purpose of business development in the RA regions, during 2017-2022 conduct joint courses with public and financial organisations on developing investment projects and improving the efficiency of business projects;
 - (3) during 2017-2022, undertake measures to engage commercial banks and universal credit organisations in funding investment and operational projects;
 - (4) during 2018-2022, during preparation of the RA Annual State Budget, develop a recommendation on inclusion of financial resources used for subsidising interest rates on lending for investment programmes.
4. In order to improve and develop the household solid waste management system, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, present to the RA Government the concept papers for the development of household solid waste management (HSWM) systems in Shirak, Lori and Syunik Marzes of Armenia;
 - (2) during 2017-2019, for all marzes in the Republic develop specific concept papers for the introduction of HSWM subsystems which, taking into account local specificities, will identify milestones for the well-establishment of subsystems;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, develop garbage disposal and sanitary cleaning standards;
 - (4) during 2018-2020, develop landfill design, building and operating regulation.

1.3. HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION, JUSTICE AND FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

The RA Government will continue making efforts to develop and implement an effective policy for protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the RA Constitution, the generally recognised principles of international law and the RA laws.

In the area of justice, the reforms of the RA Government will be aimed at modernising the legislation pursuant to the amendments made to the RA Constitution, protecting human rights and freedoms more effectively, ensuring access to and effectiveness of the judicial system and attaining the goals of the justice system through innovative solutions.

At the level of the constitutional law the new Judicial Code provides for solutions to identified issues, which include, but are not limited to the key solutions indicated below:

- the system of powers of different instance courts should be clearly separated and balanced within the judicial system;
- it is necessary to enhance the mechanisms for the internal independence of courts and judges;
- in judicial processes, a transition should be made to the use of electronic forms to the extent possible;
- it is necessary to review the trial procedure by introducing modern tools;
- for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of courts and decreasing the workload, it is necessary to promote the development of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

In order to provide free legal aid guaranteed by the RA Constitution, its accessibility should be increased, and new effective mechanisms should be put in place.

In the area of juvenile justice, the reforms will be aimed at creating and developing such structures that will ensure access to justice for children, protecting the rights of

offender, victim and witness children and reflecting the necessary peculiarities in the RA legislation and practice.

In order to meet the expectations of citizens and businesses from the justice system, reforms should be carried out in the compulsory enforcement field, which will be focused on the execution of acts currently in force in the RA and subject to compulsory enforcement in an efficient, proportionate and timely manner, and with observance of the rights of parties, by parallelly combining the information systems with guaranteeing the rights of vulnerable groups, as well as on improvement of the business climate.

The RA Government will, under the Programme, make efforts to introduce the principles of restorative justice in the area of criminal punishments, to reduce repetition of crimes and to make social re-integration of offenders more effective. Measures will be undertaken to ensure that the activities of the Probation Service are targeted and effective, that mechanisms necessary for protecting the rights of persons serving a sentence and detained persons and for achieving the objectives of punishment defined by law are in place.

In order to increase access to and effectiveness of justice, it is planned to expand the scope of involvement for the RA notary institution, which will contribute to the prevention of future disputes among persons.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In the area of human rights protection, by the end of 2019, the RA Government plans to consistently implement the Action Plan under the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights in close co-operation with civil society representatives, as well as to develop, by the end of 2019, the 2020-2022 Action Plan under the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights.

2. In order to reform the judicial system, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, revise the draft Constitutional Law on the Judicial Code, the drafts of the RA laws on the RA Civil Procedure Code and on the RA Criminal Procedure Code and submit the revised versions to the RA National Assembly for consideration;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, develop a new RA strategy for legal and judicial reforms and its action plan;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, undertake necessary measures deriving from the RA Constitutional Law on the Judicial Code, including activities for drafting regulatory legal acts;
 - (4) by the end of 2019, develop a comprehensive electronic management system jointly with the Supreme Judicial Council (upon consent).
3. In order to ensure access to justice and improving the activities of advocates, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, introduce incentive mechanisms for pro-bono legal service providers;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, expand the scope of providing free legal aid; in particular, increase the limit of the minimum amount for receiving free legal aid in cases of property (monetary) claims to one thousand five hundred-fold of the minimum salary;
 - (3) by the end of 2020, in parallel with providing free legal aid, introduce, jointly with the Chamber of Advocates, legal and institutional mechanisms necessary for the provision of affordable legal aid;
 - (4) by the end of 2021, introduce the institution of mandatory insurance against the error of law for advocates by developing criteria for compensating the damage caused due to professional error.

4. In the area of juvenile justice, by the end of 2020, the RA Government plans to reform the legislation aimed at ensuring protection of the rights of young offenders, victims and witnesses and access to justice and at regulating the child's participation in trials, as well as by the end of 2022, draft, test and introduce in the field of justice the concept paper on rehabilitation and protection services for young offenders, witnesses, and children who are victims of crime and violence.
5. In the penitentiary area, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, introduce new programmes for the vocational education of detained persons and convicts, undertake measures for ensuring ongoing vocational education as provided for in the RA Law on Employment;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, reform the penitentiary health system and improve the quality of primary healthcare services within penitentiary institutions and create guarantees for the independence of medical staff;
 - (3) by the end of 2019, develop a new Penitentiary Code and secondary legislation by reconsidering the regimes for holding persons in places of confinement, introducing a system for prevention of cases of torture or other ill-treatment, changing the mechanisms for appealing against the actions of penitentiary officers or the adopted acts;
 - (4) by the end of 2020, implement institutional reforms in the penitentiary system, conduct a relevant study and develop a programme regarding the possibility of outsourcing to the private sector a number of functions of the penitentiary service, including food provision, and regarding the limitation of providing deliveries;
 - (5) by the end of 2020, within the Penitentiary Service, develop and implement vocational programmes and actions aimed at ensuring employment and re-socialisation for detained persons and convicts, beneficiaries of the State Probation Service, as well as persons released from punishment;

- (6) by the end of 2022, improve the secondary hospital services of penitentiary healthcare;
 - (7) by the end of 2022, develop and implement programmes aimed at improving the working conditions of the penitentiary staff and reforming the system for social guarantees.
6. In the area of probation, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, ensure phase-by-phase operation of the electronic monitoring system implemented by the State Probation Service;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, implement a re-socialisation programme within the State Probation Service by engaging at least 30 percent of beneficiaries;
 - (3) by the end of 2020, ensure the use of measures of restraint that are alternative to detention;
 - (4) by the end of 2022, put into full practice the functions of the State Probation Service, as well as enhance and improve the capacities of the Service.
7. In the area of compulsory enforcement of judicial acts, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, regulate the actions undertaken by the Judicial Acts Compulsory Enforcement Service of the RA Ministry of Justice for securing a claim by introducing a more simplified procedure for selecting the attached property debtor, as well as abolishing the measures for securing the claim;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, provide the Judicial Acts Compulsory Enforcement Service of the RA Ministry of Justice with access to the database of the State Committee of Real Estate Cadastre adjunct to the RA Government, as well as to the database of the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs containing data on citizens receiving pension;

- (3) by the end of 2018, clarify the timeframes for enforcement actions, including expert examinations, by minimising and making them consistent with a set of tools of the compulsory enforcement body;
 - (4) by the end of 2019, ensure that the document flow between compulsory enforcement officers and the participants of enforcement proceedings is carried out mainly electronically, by clearly setting the timeframes for enforcement actions;
 - (5) by the end of 2019, introduce video and audio recording for specific enforcement actions within certain enforcement proceedings;
 - (6) by the end of 2019, create an electronic system between courts and the Judicial Acts Compulsory Enforcement Service, while abolishing the process of issuing writs of execution to trial participants.
8. In the notarial system, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, provide electronic communication for effective implementation of notarial actions by state bodies providing public services and for the provision of services under the one-stop-shop principle;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, expand the scope of evidence supporting facts of legal significance, including witness testimonies, by parallelly envisaging criminal liability in case a witness gives false testimony to the notary;
 - (3) by the end of 2020, build the capacities of notaries as bodies exercising preventive justice.
9. In the area of bankruptcy, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, introduce and regulate an effective set of tools for the RA Ministry of Justice to initiate disciplinary proceedings and apply sanctions to bankruptcy administrators;

- (2) by the end of 2018, make legislative amendments introducing incentives for recovery of organisations undergoing bankruptcy proceedings and undertake effective measures to establish it as a priority;
 - (3) by the end of 2019, improve the procedure for conducting qualification exams for bankruptcy administrators.
10. In the area of civil status acts registration, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2019, modernise the legislation on civil status acts registration, as well as envisage a set of tools for performing operations mainly electronically, and introduce a one-stop-shop service by ensuring reorganisation of the territorial bodies of the Civil Status Acts Registration Agency into territorial service offices;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, reform the procedures for legalisation by apostille of the RA official documents by the RA Ministry of Justice, develop and introduce an electronic apostille system;
 - (3) by the end of 2020, ensure that each case of birth and death within the RA territory is registered by an act, irrespective of whether or not an application for state registration has been filed;
 - (4) by the end of 2019, carry out reforms in the area of international kidnapping and foreign adoptions of children by stipulating all the procedures in the legislation;
 - (5) by the end of 2022, digitise paper archives of civil status acts.
11. In the area of state register of legal persons, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, make the state registration process entirely electronic, enabling on-line applications for all registrations;

- (2) by the end of 2019, upgrade the RA official website for public notifications — www.azdarar.am, introduce an on-line electronic system for announcements;
- (3) by the end of 2020, establish an Agency for Business Register on the basis of the State Register of Legal Persons, as well as develop and introduce a unified system for electronic business register;
- (4) by the end of 2021, digitise the archival documents of legal persons and create an e-archive;
- (5) by the end of 2022, simplify and enhance the system for registration of secured rights.

12. In the e-justice area, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2018, make the electronic notary system — www.e-notary.am, and the electronic system of the State Register of Legal Persons of the RA Ministry of Justice — www.e-register.am fully operational. Enable all functions of the electronic register to be performed electronically;
- (2) by the end of 2019, enhance the system of publishing regulatory legal acts by launching the official electronic bulletin;
- (3) by the end of 2019, create a legal basis for the provision of services by state and local self-government bodies, using mobile electronic digital signatures;
- (4) by the end of 2019, digitise the RA archival court materials of three years, integrate the digitised materials into the current automated systems and implement public awareness raising activities related to the digital archive system;
- (5) by the end of 2020, in the justice system, build the capacities for providing on-line services to citizens, based on electronic databases and software solutions, using ID cards and mobile electronic digital signature tools;

- (6) by the end of 2020, draft, introduce and implement the terms of reference for development of the e-probation electronic management system of the State Probation Service;
 - (7) by the end of 2019, make the Register of Detained Persons and Convicts electronic management system (e-penitentiary) fully operational;
 - (8) during 2019-2020, introduce an electronic system for the hotline service of the RA Ministry of Justice;
 - (9) during 2020-2021, combine the electronic management systems constituting an integral part of e-justice;
 - (10) by the end of 2022, create an electronic system of petitions.
13. In the anti-corruption area, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, develop the institutional anti-corruption framework, create and launch an autonomous preventive anti-corruption body in conformity with international legal standards and requirements;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, undertake measures for continuous implementation of the current Anti-Corruption Strategy emphasising the need for recruiting conscientious, honest and professional staff for the public service sector. To develop a new, far-reaching and effective anti-corruption strategy by defining new anti-corruption target areas;
 - (3) by the end of 2019, undertake measures for continuous improvement of the institutions of declaration, ethics, incompatibility and other limitations, and continuously expand the list of declarants;
 - (4) by the end of 2019, clarify the scope of corruption crimes and offences at the legislative level;

- (5) by the end of 2021, improve the regulatory impact assessment system in the anti-corruption area;
 - (6) by the end of 2018, introduce and enhance effective mechanisms for the protection of whistle-blowers and ensure that they are enforced. Create a unified electronic platform for whistle-blowing, enabling the whistle-blower to report anonymously;
 - (7) by the end of 2019, undertake measures for implementing actions necessary within the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) validation process;
 - (8) by the end of 2020, undertake measures to examine the subordination of the preliminary investigation bodies investigating corruption crimes and the possibility of granting the powers of investigating corruption crimes to a single body.
14. In the area of improving the business climate and protecting business interests, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, develop the RA Law on the Defender of Interests of Business People and submit it to the RA National Assembly and, by the end of 2018, introduce the institution of the defender of interests of business people as an effective alternative measure for protecting the violated or disputed rights and legitimate interests of business people and for dispute resolution.

1.4. SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER

The current level of development public relations and the traditionally high expectations of the public from the police to counteract illegal phenomena urge to have a police with the powers that would be able to respond adequately to certain threats posed by the globalisation of crime (terrorism, supranational crimes, etc.), to

protect the person and the public from illegal encroachments and, with its principles of operation, to comply with the democratic system of values.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to improve the effectiveness of gaining public trust and the support of citizens, the RA Government plans that, by the end of the first half of 2019, for ensuring civilised co-operation with journalists covering assemblies, the Police will, with the participation of civil society stakeholders, ensure drafting and publication of methodical guides pertaining to the grounds, terms, procedure for restricting or stopping assemblies, all the criteria for peaceful assembly, the scope of police support to peaceful assembly, as well as to the rules of co-operation with journalists covering assemblies.
2. In order to increase the use of modern technical means in the operation of the RA Police, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2020, provide modern technical means for performing police functions, namely, the functions of maintaining public order and ensuring public safety, detecting, preventing, stopping crimes and administrative offences;
 - (2) by the end of 2020, acquire and use mobile video-recording devices to be affixed to the uniforms of patrol servicemen in order to control the actions of police officers performing their official duties and thereby introducing more effective mechanisms for human rights protection.
3. In order to increase the preventive operational effectiveness of the RA Police, the RA Government plans, by the end of 2018, to create operative management centres that use digital technologies in Gyumri and Vanadzor cities within the marz departments of the RA Police, which will allow to consolidate in one centre full information on offences and cases dangerous for the public, to ensure that they

are promptly addressed, and to manage the police forces and means properly and effectively.

1.5. REDUCING EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER RISK

The policy implemented by the RA Government in the field of civil protection in emergencies will be aimed at reducing the natural and manmade disaster risk, preventing and eliminating potential consequences, constituting an additional element to ensure the security of the state and contributing to the country's sustainable development.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. By the end of 2018, develop drafts amending the Laws On the Protection of the Population in Emergencies, On the Civil Defence, On the Seismic Protection and other legal acts for improving the legal framework for the civil protection in emergencies.
2. In emergencies and under martial law, in order to ensure that public administration and local government authorities are prepared, the RA Government plans to organise and ensure the preparedness of the RA public administration and local government authorities, emergency commissions, evacuation commissions, civil defence staff and civil defence services during 2017-2022.
3. In order to create a unified disaster risk reduction electronic management system, the RA Government plans to launch, during 2017-2020, a unified disaster risk reduction electronic system.
4. In order to develop early warning systems for disasters and reliable and steady communication systems, the RA Government plans to introduce, during 2017-2022, a modern system of early warning and informing the population on disasters through the use of digital connection.

5. In order to ensure the development, training and co-operation between rescue and other rapid response forces, during 2017-2022, the RA Government plans to:

(1) create and develop the rescue and other rapid response forces, including:

- a. in borderline areas, namely capacity building for 10 civil defence bases in Tavush Marz along with the creation of 6 civil defence bases in Tavush Marz and 4 in Vayots Dzor Marz;
- b. enhance capacities for monitoring and forecasting forest fires;
- c. enhance capacities for engineering and mechanical and cynological groups;
- d. create domestically qualified teams in line with international standards in Aragatsotn, Kotayk, Armavir, Ararat, Gegharkunik and Vayots Dzor Marzes of Armenia;
- e. during 2019-2021, set up training camps in Tavush, Gegharkunik, Ararat, Armavir, Vayots Dzor and Aragatsotn Marzes;
- f. during 2018-2022, conduct exercises jointly with rescue and other rapid response forces, mutual co-operation and practical skills enhancement.

6. In order to enhance the education system in disaster risk reduction, the RA Government plans to:

(1) during 2017-2022, carry out the accreditation process of the Crisis Management State Academy by introducing state-of-the-art information technologies and new educational mechanisms and curricula.

7. In order to improve disaster medicine, during 2017-2022, the RA Government plans to:

(1) carry out training for the enhancement of professional skills and capacity building of medical personnel, as well as training events;

- (2) create a unified database of trained specialists in disaster medicine, in conjunction with the Ministry of Healthcare.
8. In order to strengthen the municipal disaster risk management capacities, during 2017-2022, the RA Government plans to introduce the crisis management system in urban communities of borderline marzes by engaging the private sector in disaster risk management processes.
9. In order to achieve sustainable partnership at the international and regional levels, during 2017-2022, the RA Government plans to enhance the Armenian-Russian humanitarian response centre, as well as promote participation in joint projects and events focused on disaster risk reduction carried out by international organisations and partner countries.
10. In order to enhance capacities to manage uncontrolled movements of people resulting from major disasters or military operations, during 2017-2020, the RA Government plans to develop and approve a capacity building plan for managing uncontrolled movements of people resulting from major disasters and military operations.
11. In order to reform the seismic protection service system, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2022, upgrade, digitise and expand the national seismic hazard monitoring network by equipping it with modern communication means;
 - (2) during 2018-2020, develop a seismic vulnerability assessment plan for important reservoir dams.
12. In order to develop meteorological and anti-hail systems, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, develop the 2017-2021 Action Plan for Anti-Hail Protection System;

- (2) during 2018-2019, create a more effective and complementary anti-hail protection system that will also include modern means of missile defence;
- (3) during 2017-2022, carry out a phase-by-phase upgrade and automation of hydrological and meteorological observations.

1.6. STATE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

One of the important functions of the Government of the Republic of Armenia is efficient state property management. To ensure efficient state property management, the main objectives of the state property management policy shall be to:

- raise the level of efficiency of managing the state property necessary for fulfilling state functions, simplify the administrative procedures;
- create a favourable environment for public-private partnership, which will raise the level of efficiency of state property management;
- increase profitability of commercial organisations with state participation;
- alienate the right on state property, which has high commercial demand, which will increase the social/public utility.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to raise the level of efficiency of and to fundamentally improve state property management, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, approve the 2018-2020 State Property Management Programme, with tentative action plan, expected financial results and required expenditures, responsible bodies and expected outcomes;
 - (2) by the end of 2020, privatise the companies included in the 2017-2020 Privatisation List, by also envisaging the arrangement of sales of state-owned

shares through the stock exchange;

- (3) in 2018, simplify the procedures for alienation of state property, long-term and short-term lease, with minimum administrative procedures;
 - (4) cut down state expenditures and improve the quality of services provided to the public in 2018, explore the possibility of delegating some of the powers of state property management in the RA marzes and come up with a proposal on pilot testing;
 - (5) during 2018-2020, implement control over economic and financial results, defined by the 3-year Programme, including control over the implementation of programmes by commercial organisations with state participation.
2. In order to expand public-private partnership, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, introduce the format for payment in instalments for the sales price of state property as a result of which it will be allowed to transfer to the private sector (with a condition of payment in instalment) the state property that has been left out of economic turnover;
 - (2) during 2018-2020, achieve the “business unit sales” principle in the set of tools for alienation and privatisation of state property with high investment attractiveness, for which 10% of transaction amount will be used to compensate the costs for preparing the property for sales and arranging for the sales.
3. In order to increase the efficiency of management of commercial organisations with state participation, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, define and, during 2018-2020, introduce the main financial, economic and qualitative indicators for the operation of commercial organisations with state participation, also through consent and monitoring of their business plans;

- (2) during 2017-2020, widely use the practice of handing over to trust management property rights for government shares within commercial organisations with 50% or over 50% of state participation;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, reorganise commercial organisations with 100% state participation into non-commercial organisations, if the commercial organisations with state shares do not generate profit as a result of their operation;
 - (4) by the end of 2018, establish new forms and mechanisms for promoting executive directors, managers, authorised state representatives of commercial organisations with state participation.
4. In order to set up the composition and correct (preferable) structure of state property, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, create an on-line platform for the sales of state property, which will present all the terms and conditions for acquisition of property;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, consider the possibility of applying an auction method in the RA without previously announcing the starting price for the sales of state property and come up with corresponding proposals.

1.7. CADASTRE

In recent years, some public and private organisations in the Republic of Armenia have initiated activities to develop a geo-information system (hereinafter referred to as the GIS), yet these activities address certain narrow professional issues only related to their fields.

Studying the advanced international practice and according to INSPIRE 2007/2/EC directives, all the geodetic and cartographic materials existing in Armenia need to be harmonised with international standards, including with ISO 19115:2003 "Geographic

Information — Metadata" methodology for developing spatial data and metadata, as well as with the requirements for the rules regarding metadata profiles.

One of the activities of state significance is creating maps and other basic atlases for the educational system. The formerly announced 32 names of educational maps have been provided (on a free-of-charge basis) to schools in the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh. In line with the RA Government Programme on Development of Tourism Sector, it is necessary to publish various touristic maps and road atlases. These maps will present Armenia to overseas tourists in a popular form.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to improve the existing situation in the field of geodesy and mapping, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2020, complete the activities for creation and publication of the Russian version of the National Atlas of Armenia in the field of thematic mapping, while creating multi-functional maps for the RA consolidated communities;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, develop and introduce the basic geo-information system for the RA cities;
 - (3) during 2017-2022, based on aerial photography of the RA territory, develop 1:2000 scale topographic plans of the cities, particularly, based on aerial photography of the RA territory, topographic plans of 1:2000 scale will be developed for 46 cities of the RA;
 - (4) during 2018-2019, transform the RA scaled maps in line with ISO international standards;
 - (5) during 2018-2022, implement works in the field of geographic names, particularly during 2017-2021, implement works for maintaining and updating

the state catalogue for the RA geographical names, as well as continue the works on developing and publishing various dictionaries and directories, which are in high demand.

2. In order to improve the situation in land use planning and control, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) during 2018-2022, implement the land consolidation programme — each year within 5 communities;
- (2) during 2018-2022, develop the general scheme of the RA land resources management.

3. In order to improve the current situation in the field of real estate cadastral valuation, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) during 2018-2019, establish a unified, new area assessment zoning in the RA;
- (2) during 2018-2020, conduct cadastral valuation works for the RA agricultural land plots, new qualitative and economic valuation of the RA agricultural land plots.

4. In the field of automated provision of information on-line, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2017, develop on-line services, making them potentially accessible and user-friendly. After registering and uploading information about owned real estate on the official website of the Committee (www.e-cadastre.am), all further possible information shall be provided through an on-line regime. On-line provision of information shall be delivered in two directions:
 - a. information that can be provided to any person, will be provided without any registration through means of simple and short actions;

- b. owners shall receive the information after registering in the system and upon uploading information about the real estate that belongs to them according to the proprietary right. Registration in the system and submission of information about a unit of real estate is required for identification of the subject and the real estate that belongs to him or her.

2. FOREIGN POLICY AND DEFENCE

2.1. FOREIGN POLICY

Based on the foreign policy benchmarks outlined by the President of the Republic of Armenia to further strengthen external security of the Republic of Armenia, assure favourable external environment for development, increase the involvement in global and regional processes, develop and strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations with friendly and partner countries, ensure effective participation in international organisations, the implementation of the foreign policy course will be aimed at:

- peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, based on fundamental principles and norms of international law, particularly the peoples' right to self-determination;
- consolidation of military-political component of external security;
- international recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide, prevention of the crime of genocide;
- In bilateral relations:
 - further deepening and broadening of allied interaction and strategic relations with Russia;
 - strengthening of friendly partnership with the United States of America;
 - further developing and strengthening of bilateral relations with European countries;

- deepening of good-neighbourly and mutually beneficial relations with immediate neighbours — Georgia and Iran;
- undertaking of real steps towards deepening mutually beneficial co-operation with the CIS member states;
- further strengthening of comprehensive relations with China. Enhancement of co-operation with India;
- continuation of traditional interaction with partner countries of the Middle East;
- developing of co-operation with the continent of America;
- developing of relations with Asia, Africa and Oceania states;
- normalising of Armenian-Turkish relations without preconditions;
- In the multilateral format:
 - active involvement in collaboration within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU);
 - continuous deepening of co-operation within the CSTO;
 - expansion of comprehensive partnership with the European Union;
 - active involvement in co-operation within the CIS;
 - more active participation within the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe and other international organisations and protection of interests of the Republic of Armenia;
 - deepening of the engagement of Armenia in the International Organisation of la Francophonie, proper organisation of the Francophonie Summit to be held in Armenia in 2018;
 - continuation of the political dialogue with NATO, consistent implementation of the Individual Partnership Action Plan;
 - development of active co-operation with international and regional economic and financial institutions;
- fostering of sustainable economic development of Armenia, in particular:
 - developing of bilateral economic relations by means of unblocking

communication channels, by expanding the economic component in external relations;

- promoting of the export of domestic products, identifying of new markets, increasing of foreign investments and the number of tourists to Armenia by means of active involvement of diplomatic missions;
 - intensifying of the works of intergovernmental commissions and assuring of involvement of the Armenian side in the economic events;
 - more effective involvement of the Diaspora in different fields of development of Armenian economy;
- protection of rights and interests of the RA citizens and legal entities in foreign countries;
 - assistance to compatriots, as well as to Syrian-Armenians, who have appeared in emergency situations;
 - preservation of Armenian historical and cultural heritage in foreign states;
 - implementation of actions to make Armenian foreign policy more comprehensible in the international arena and for the creation of more favourable international public opinion on Armenia;
 - supporting — in the bilateral and multilateral formats the development of parliamentary ties and consolidation of parliamentary diplomacy.

2.2. DIASPORA

Formed as a result of the onerous destiny of the Armenian people, today, the Diaspora has become Armenia's competitive advantage. The Diaspora is the continuation of Armenia. The development of the Armenia-Diaspora partnership, the consolidation and purposeful use of the potential of the Armenian nation and the ensuring of the unity of all of its sectors is one of the most important factors for resisting the challenges facing Armenia.

Our sisters and brothers in the Diaspora have great experience, knowledge and skills in various sectors, and the investment and use of that experience, knowledge and skills in Armenia can lead to the formation of new ideas, introduce a new working culture and create competitive products and services. Our compatriots of the Diaspora should be able to create added value in Armenia.

The Armenia-Diaspora partnership is hinged on the values of unity, responsibility and transparency.

The activities of the RA Government in the upcoming years will be mainly aimed at assisting in the targeted use of the Diaspora's potential, in self-organisation and in preservation of the national identity, as well as at integrating Diaspora Armenians in Armenia.

1. In order to ensure targeted use of the Diaspora's potential, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2022, ensure increase in the level of comprehensive ties between Armenia and the Diaspora and the level of co-operation, specify pan-Armenian priorities and implement joint projects along with pan-national structures, professional associations and individuals in the Diaspora;
 - (2) during 2018-2019, assess the potential of Armenian communities in various countries and develop an action plan for engagement of the Diaspora's potential in Armenia according to those countries;
 - (3) during 2017-2018, develop effective mechanisms to provide Diaspora Armenian businesspeople with access to information about investment projects received from the RA Government, local self-government bodies and other sources, as well as investment opportunities in Armenia — privileges granted to small and medium businesses in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Armenia and the advantages of export across EAEU countries and international markets;

- (4) during 2017-2019, introduce the advantages of tourism in Armenia in Armenian-populated regions in order to promote the visits of Diaspora Armenians to the homeland, particularly through the organising of gatherings, meetings and other events in the CIS region, Europe and in the USA;
 - (5) by the end of 2018, develop an action plan aimed at supporting the activities of Diaspora Armenian doctors, businesspeople, lawyers, engineers, architects and other professional associations;
 - (6) during 2018-2019, ensure participation of Diaspora Armenians living in Armenia and Diaspora Armenian specialists in developing and implementing healthcare and ecotourism development projects.
2. In order to ensure the Diaspora's self-organisation and preserve the national identity, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2022, continue taking measures to promote the self-organisation of the Diaspora, as well as to assist in the co-ordination of poorly organised communities;
 - (2) during 2018-2022, conduct training courses for Diaspora Armenian teachers, create and disseminate training/educational videos in both Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian, distribute training manuals, textbooks and other materials to communities in order to raise the level of Armenian language proficiency among young Diaspora Armenians;
 - (3) during 2018-2022, expand homeland recognition programmes for young Diaspora Armenians, the number of participants and the geography;
 - (4) during 2018-2022, continue publishing and disseminating books and educational manuals devoted to the Armenian Genocide, organise meetings and discussions with relevant structures and specialists in Armenia and the Diaspora;

- (5) during 2018-2019, carry out systematic research on the issues of Islamised and crypto Armenians and propose approaches;
 - (6) during 2017-2022, ensure ongoing assistance of the RA Government for Georgian Armenians and for the enhancement of youth and cultural centres;
 - (7) by the end of 2018, develop and adopt an action plan for co-operation and support in the information field with Armenian-language media outlets in the Diaspora.
3. In order to support the integration of Diaspora Armenians in the Republic of Armenia, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2018, ensure ongoing implementation of social and economic integration programmes for Syrian-Armenians and Iraqi-Armenians residing in Armenia;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, amend the draft RA Law on Repatriation and submit it for adoption;
 - (3) by the end of 2019, develop a national integration strategy for our compatriots in emergency situations that will include a toolkit for the provision of assistance from international organisations and donor countries.

2.3. DEFENCE

The defence sector of the Republic of Armenia shall secure independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of the borders of the Republic of Armenia, security of the population of Armenia and Artsakh, timely disclosure, assessment, prevention, suspension and neutralisation of existing and potential military threats.

The secure environment of the Republic of Armenia, military-political and military challenges facing our country prove that security is the only guarantee of the progress and sustainable development of our country. Daily encroachment on the security of

Armenia and Artsakh, direct threats to the resumption of large-scale military operations and practical steps to implement it leave us with no alternative but to continuously and consistently raise the level of security of our country, which is going to be one of the priorities of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

Building adequate military capacities for the guaranteed defence of Armenia and Artsakh requires resources that are disproportionate to the demographic and economic capabilities of our state. Therefore, the defence policy will continue to be guided by the principles of the nation-army concept. This will allow developing complex and non-standard solutions in defence policies, interconnected (integrated) and balanced with the public, as well as trustworthy decisions that are interconnected with external, economic, social, informational, public, educational and scientific political directions, and will ensure maximum efficiency of the full potential of Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora. Moreover, the criterion of effectiveness of the use of the national potential in the defence sector should be not only the utmost targeted utilisation of available resources (consumption), but the added value that will be generated consequently.

Our task is to establish favourable military-political capabilities, a combat-ready, constantly upgraded defence system that is equipped with up-to-date armament and modernised armed forces in line with the developments in military art, and effectively utilises and promotes modern achievements of the military industry and military science, with the direct engagement of the society having full confidence and support towards this system.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to ensure a consistent, harmonious and balanced growth of defence potential and capacities, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2020, continue replenishment of the armed forces with armament, military equipment and special equipment necessary for qualitative upgrade of modern combat operations and fire-fighting capacities, through development of military-industrial branches of the economy, promotion of their efficiency and economic profitability, application of modern national scientific and technical achievements, investment promotion and international co-operation. In particular, in line with the vision of developing a military-industrial complex, and based on the RA legislation regulating the sphere and enforcement measures thereof, to establish a national military innovation system where the RA Ministry of Defence will work directly with the RA higher educational institutions and frame the demand for training of personnel in natural sciences, information technologies and other disciplines that are of interest for the armed forces. The RA Ministry of Defence will also create appropriate laboratories at higher educational institutions, at the same time promoting the integration of former specialists having worked at the military-industrial complex into the Armenian innovation system;
- (2) by the end of 2020, establish flexible effective governance mechanisms based on the contemporary theories of command and leadership, as well as on the amendments to the RA Constitution, results of strategic review of the defence and on the new legislation, which will ensure in the defence system the improvement of the management ethics, enhancement of transparency, accountability, democratic and civilian control over the armed forces, integrity, and the link between the armed forces and the Parliament;
- (3) by the end of 2022, develop simultaneously the national defence capacities and allied and partnership relations, establishing an interconnected security safeguards system, which will ensure necessary conditions for establishing a favourable military-political environment, developing military capacities, maintaining military balance in the region, international involvement of the

armed forces and interoperability, introducing best practices, international obligations for collective defence, and implementing effective mechanisms.

2. In order to make the activities, functions and processes of the defence sector more efficient, functional and targeted, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2019, introduce an effective and transparent resource management system, enabling the transition from quantitative indicators to qualitative indicators in the planning system, as well as formulate strategic (long-term and targeted) defence planning and programme budgeting systems.
3. In order to increase combat readiness and effectiveness of the armed forces, and combat skills proficiency of the personnel, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2020, continue improving the combat readiness and readiness of the armed forces, enhancing the command system, reforming the military unit, optimising and replenishing the composition, improving combat, logistics and moral-psychological support necessary for implementing combat tasks in a full and effective manner;
 - (2) by the end of 2020, upgrade the combat-duty system, enhance the security of personnel involved in combat duty, assure timely disclosure, prevention and harassment of any attack by means of necessary video surveillance and intelligence systems, engineered combat positions, officer training and special training programmes.
4. In order to bring the nation-army concept to life, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2020, increase the interest in military service and provide favourable conditions for military recruitment in order to enhance the professional component of the armed forces, especially highlighting the importance of compulsory military service programmes such as, expanding

the professional component at the level of troops of the armed forces, recruiting contractual soldiers and engaging professional non-commissioned officers at the level of junior command. At the same time, to set up an efficient system of reserve officers as one of the key directions for replenishment of the armed forces;

- (2) by the end of 2020, ensure participation of every conscripted citizen of the Republic of Armenia, strengthening the principle of justice in the conscription system and expanding the opportunity for women to join the military service on voluntary basis by considering the military service as a promising opportunity for education and professional development. At the same time, to thoroughly study the pre-recruitment, effective recruitment processes, including medical expertise in order to reduce corruption risks and improve efficiency;
- (3) by the end of 2020, develop a strategy for social security for military servants and members of their families, those of the disabled, military servants who fell in battle (perished) and missing soldiers. Under the new strategy, to ensure for the above-mentioned persons an effective social security system and mechanisms that would include housing, free medical care, leisure services, as well as other benefits and safeguards;
- (4) by the end of 2022, transform the sector of defence into a platform for introduction of new state administration approaches, formation of sound public and interpersonal relations, reinforcement of patriotism and moral norms, promotion of scientific (applied and theoretical) and economic investments, by raising the public awareness, public oversight and confidence, strengthening the atmosphere of fairness and transparency and safeguarding human rights and fundamental freedoms in the armed forces, and ensuring a healthy moral-psychological atmosphere;

- (5) by the end of 2022, establish a transparent system for military education and career advancement, ensure modern educational and methodical programmes in the field of military education, enhance and make competitive the national military-education system providing primary military, vocational, higher and post-graduate education, and develop opportunities for incentivising career advancement based on merits and educational standards;
- (6) by the end of 2022, complete the military-healthcare reforms, which will ensure provision of medical services — at a qualitatively new level — by integrated military-civil healthcare facilities, owing to new infrastructures and equipment, as well as improved professionalism of specialists.

3. ECONOMIC SECTOR

3.1. ECONOMIC PROGRESS, BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

Armenia is a country with a small domestic market, economy's capacity to offer competitive supply in external markets. The supply-led economic growth model shall guide the country, with export being the main engine of economic growth. For this purpose, raising the competitiveness of exporting producers and through this strengthening their current positions in external markets, as well as penetrating and positioning in new markets, is of specific importance. Realisation of these programmatic approaches requires diversifying the real sector of economy and export markets.

State regulations, state services and administrative procedures will become more simple, transparent and less costly via continued efforts towards improvement of business environment. The state will consistently improve the competitive environment ensuring free and equal access/exit to commodities markets.

Institutional systems for protection of investors and provision of guarantees will continuously develop in Armenia, thus strengthening investor's trust in the country and assuring high-level of partnership. Investment projects with the involvement of foreign investors will specifically focus on meeting the demands of upgrading the economy via modern industrial technologies, which will in parallel increase the capacity of the economy to absorb new investments. Simultaneously, the investment projects, which promote inclusive economic growth and create new jobs, will be under the RA Government's immediate care.

The RA Government pursues the objective to ensure qualitative progress of economy through innovative development, and as a result rapid productivity growth in the overall economy as well as in the main sectors of economy shall be recorded. Moreover, while implementing the wage policy, the RA Government will uphold the principle of not hindering the growth of competitiveness of the exportable sector, by sustaining the time-tested proportions of the minimum wage and median wage applied in the Eastern European and other countries which were successful in the similar experience.

The RA Government will seek to secure consistent high growth of tourists and balanced distribution throughout the country by means of continuously increasing the competitiveness of Armenia and Armenian tourist product in the global market.

The initiatives and reforms launched in the above-mentioned sectors, envisage the following steps:

Export

In the context of export-led growth, the target of the RA Government is to increase the Export of goods and services/GDP ratio to 40-45%. To achieve this target, the policy shall be implemented in two main directions:

- (1) maximum elimination of barriers to access to current markets and especially those

with preferential regimes (EAEU, EU) and increase of access to new export markets within the EAEU framework;

(2) achieving preferential trade regimes with target countries in the bilateral format:

In this respect:

1. In order to expand accessibility of export markets the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2017, introduce the new Registered Exporter System for self-certification of origin of goods under the EU “GSP+” preferential trade regime;
- (2) starting from 2017, within the EAEU framework, arrange active participation in negotiations, pre-negotiation processes and demonstrate pro-active approach in setting up multilateral favourable trade regimes with Vietnam, China and Iran;
- (3) continue maintaining and expanding preferential trade regimes (including GSP). Initiate negotiations with the Gulf countries by the end of 2017, and with India — by the end of 2021;
- (4) establish co-operation between exporting and importing companies to foster exports of Armenian products to target markets. By the end of 2017, fully develop similar mechanism for Armenian-Iranian co-operation;
- (5) by the end of 2018, assure mutual recognition of jewellery hallmarking in EAEU countries;
- (6) by the end of 2018, establish in the RA territory a representation of an international provider organisation, which implements quality control programs and organises inter-laboratory testing, and introduce an eLAB electronic system;
- (7) by the end of 2019, sign an agreement with the European Accreditation

Organisation (EA) on the bilateral/multilateral recognition of the National Accreditation Body SNCO;

- (8) by the end of 2022, assist in involving the Armenian production within public procurement systems of the EAEU countries, create common markets for gas, electricity and transport, and expand the common market of services.
2. In order to improve export promotion mechanisms, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, diversify the sources of rough diamond and assure more efficient ways of procuring rough diamond from the existing sources;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, support the introduction of “Armzone” electronic trade platform for products of Armenian origin in the Russian market and ensure its publicity;
 - (3) by the end of 2017, issue country of origin certificates and simplify the procedures for export of dual-use goods;
 - (4) by the end of 2017, ensure a comprehensive information availability on import procedures for Armenian products to access at least 5 target markets and on the RA legislative requirements, and assure its full realization in 2018 for the rest of the target markets;
 - (5) during 2017-2018, introduce more efficient mechanisms to support participation in exhibitions and fairs;
 - (6) by the end of 2018, establish an electronic platform for Armenian exporting manufacturers and their products;
 - (7) by the end of 2018, assure more than two-fold increase in secured export volume;
 - (8) during 2018-2022, organise annual “Made in Armenia” events in the target export markets.

Business Environment

The main objective of reforms is to ensure such business environment in the country that is characterised by sustainable and predictable regulations of minimum necessary volume, high level of certainty, proportional and equal application. If they are efficiently implemented, it is expected that as a result of the upcoming 4-5-year reforms, Armenia will be positioned among the top 20 countries in the World Bank's Doing Business Report. A number of activities will aim to achieve these objectives:

1. In order to consistently continue the implementation of annual business environment improvement programmes, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, build the capacity to submit environmental protection and nature use reports in a fully electronic manner, thus completing the system of electronic submission of tax reports;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, reduce the number of actions required for electricity connection;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, ensure wide use of electronic systems for issuing urban development permits;
 - (4) by the end of 2018, establish accelerated procedures for state services, in case they are not yet established;
 - (5) by the end of 2019, make legislative amendments, by creating incentives for defining as a priority the rehabilitation of organisations undergoing bankruptcy proceedings.
2. In order to improve the mechanisms for protection of economic competition, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, ensure legislative clarification to the cases qualifying as abuse of dominant position;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, improve the mechanisms for summarising individual

decisions in the field of economic competition, clarifying their precedent logic, and informing the economic entities and the general public.

3. In order to support and develop small and medium-size entrepreneurship, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, build institutional capacities for statistical data collection and processing on SME sector, and in 2019, publish the statistical information;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, develop and introduce a new set of state support tools in line with the new needs of SMEs, as well as deepen the collaboration with international institutions implementing support programmes in the SMEs sector.

Investments

The RA Government plans to substantially and drastically increase the foreign investments/GDP ratio. For this purpose, the investment policy shall be implemented in the following 3 main directions:

1. In order to protect investors and strengthen institutions providing guarantees, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop a new draft RA Law on Foreign Investments, in line with international standards;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, improve the legislative framework regulating the operation of free economic zones (FEZ);
 - (3) by the end of 2018, develop legislative and institutional regulations for public-private partnership;
 - (4) by the end of 2018, improve the RA legislation on the protection of intellectual property rights;

- (5) by the end of 2018, implement the project on granting the RA citizenship upon some investments in the RA;
- 2. In order to shift from the overall investment climate improvement policy to "targeted" strategic policy, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, discuss and submit proposals on possible privileges to promote job creation in selected target areas (including textile, apparel and footwear production) and by place of operation;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, build the capacities of the Development Foundation of Armenia to develop packages for investment programmes, which comply with the international standards, and to ensure the continuity of this function;
 - (3) by the end of 2017, strengthen the capacities of the Development Foundation of Armenia by means of fully applying the “one-stop-shop” principle in working with investors, attracting of investments and after-care services;
 - (4) by the end of 2017, develop practical approaches to economic diplomacy;
 - (5) by the end of 2018, develop effective financing mechanisms for marz investment projects;
 - (6) by the end of 2018, develop clear-cut formats and mechanisms for establishing bilateral relations with leading transnational companies;
 - (7) by the end of 2019, ensure that Armenia is included in the OECD FDI Regulatory Restrictiveness Index;
 - (8) by the end of 2020, develop and implement strategies on attracting foreign investments in at least 5 target sectors.
- 3. In order to develop creative and innovative businesses, promote technological development:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, map the RA innovation ecosystem (policy (legislative)

framework, organisations, sector development programmes, innovative business, education and research), take inventory of organisations in the high technology sector in Armenia and their capacities;

- (2) by the end of 2018, develop innovation development strategy and a roadmap to promote the introduction of innovative technologies in the core sectors of economy;
- (3) by the end of 2018, attract at least 2 transnational organisations aiming at establishing research and development laboratories;
- (4) by the end of 2018, develop and introduce special mechanisms for support to the advanced technology-based industries.

Tourism

The RA Government aims to increase the number of annual tourist visits to at least 3 million through actions and measures to be undertaken during 2017-2022. For this purpose, the following activities are planned to be implemented:

1. In order to improve the legislative framework regulating the tourism sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, establish a visa-free regime for the entry to Armenia or simplify the visa issuing procedures for citizens from a number of target market countries, as well as facilitate border crossings for touristic means of transportation;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, define new quality requirements for tourism services and introduce mechanisms for their fulfilment;
 - (3) by the end of 2019, introduce the tourism registry.

2. By the end of 2020, complete the creation of a modern integrated touristic information network in the territory of the Republic. In order to raise international awareness about Armenia, to diversify the tourism product, to improve statistical information system, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop and adopt the Strategy on Pilgrimage to the First Christian Country, ensuring its implementation in 2018;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, provide state support to the organisation of traditional annual festivals, celebrations and other touristic events in the marzes of Armenia;
 - (3) during 2017-2022, enhance sport tourism by organising international tournaments in the RA;
 - (4) during 2017-2022, strengthen, enhance and promote Armenia's profile in the global market, as a country that is secure and attractive from the perspective of tourism;
 - (5) by the end of 2018, improve method of maintaining tourism statistics, by creating preconditions for introducing the Tourism Satellite Account System;
 - (6) by the end of 2020, adopt the concept paper on ecotourism development.

3.2. FISCAL POLICY AND FINANCES

Sustainable economic growth is the key to ensuring social welfare and providing the best solution for social issues, in the light of continuous increase in the number of people who ensure this growth and benefit from it. In the upcoming years, the fiscal policy will be aimed at boosting economic growth and gradually increasing the growth potential in the economy. In the med-term perspective, the macroeconomic framework of fiscal policy will be focused on debt stabilising policy, which is the most important precondition for ensuring sustainable macroeconomic environment to support

economic growth.

The objective of revenue policy will be to ensure a fair, perceptible and predictable environment for businesses and foreign investors; it should also allow for fair distribution of resources in the economy as well as to redirect them to the exporting sector.

In the world, the entity ensuring competitive and long-term sustainable growth is the business that follows transparent and international accountability principles. Qualified audit should become a required norm for competitive business, and the RA Government will endeavour to establish an effective quality control system for auditing services.

In order to have targeted use of public finances in an efficient and effective manner, in the area of budgeting process in the upcoming years the RA Government plans to make a transition from the system of financial indicators to the system of quantitative and qualitative result-based indicators for assessing the programmes funded from the RA State Budget, as well as to strengthen the financial discipline. In this sense, in the upcoming years, the methodological base for programme budgeting will be complemented and also the level of automation of public finance management functions will be raised, the scope of users of e-procurement will be expanded, as well as the internal state control systems will be strengthened.

The need to stocktake and efficiently manage public sector assets and liabilities, as well as to identify the explicit impact of the use of budgetary funds thereon, requires new accounting and reporting standards. To achieve this objective, the RA Government will introduce the new accrual-based accounting system for the public sector.

Developed and advanced financial markets are essential for sustainable long-term economic growth, which allows directing internal savings into efficient investments. Cut down of shadow economy, operation of funded pension system and formation of internal savings and streamlining of the latter to the financial system will allow to

diversify and develop financial tools and markets, while making financial resources more accessible for investments. To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the RA Government will make efforts in the following directions:

1. In order to boost economic growth potential and ensure macroeconomic stability, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) raise the level of efficiency of public debt management and ensure sustainability of public debt:
 - a. by the end of 2017, introduce an effective system of assessment of behaviour of participants of primary market of the RA Government treasury bonds;
 - b. starting from 2018, introduce new fiscal rules that will aim at stabilising debt, yet will not hinder economic growth;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, introduce a new toolkit to comprehensively assess the impact of fiscal policy on the economy;
 - (3) by the end of 2022, design a budgetary framework for the medium-term perspective, which plans to gradually increase capital expenditures, possibly moderating current expenditures and mostly highlighting their efficiency so as not to create problems in terms of social needs.
2. In the field of tax policy and international tax co-operation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) revise the mechanisms for taxation of real estate to introduce a fair taxation system and promote involvement of idle property in creating added value in the economy. Particularly:
 - a. by the end of 2017, develop and broadly consider the package of legislative amendments aimed at reforming the unified tax system for real estate;

- b. by the end of 2018, develop and approve the regulatory legal acts supporting the application of the new system;
 - (2) during 2019-2020, launch the OECD system of automatic exchange of taxation information in accordance with the global forum standards of transparency and exchange of information for taxation purposes;
 - (3) during 2017-2019, conduct the process of membership of Armenia to OECD Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Programme and by the end of 2020, localise the requirements for the activities, envisaged by separate actions of the BEPS for transfer pricing legislation;
 - (4) in order to promote cross-border activities of economic entities and interstate trade, expand the scope of the agreements for the avoidance of double taxation, in particular:
 - a. by the end of 2018, to increase, by at least 8, the number of signed agreements on the avoidance of double taxation;
 - b. during 2019-2022, to initial agreements on the avoidance of double taxation with at least 5 countries.
- 3. In order to improve the regulation in the fields of private sector accounting and external audit, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, develop a legislative package based on the concept paper on reforms, stressing the accounting and audit sector quality control systems;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, formulate the necessary sub-legislative framework and, by the end of 2020, introduce a system of efficient professional and public oversight over the accounting and audit sectors.
- 4. In order to raise the level of efficiency of the public finance management system, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) expand the scope of clients using an e-procurement system to raise the level of efficiency and transparency in public procurement, as well as to increase competitiveness. In particular:
 - a. by the end of 2017, introduce the e-auction system for procurement;
 - b. by the end of 2018, harmonise the e-procurement system with modern standards for e-management systems;
 - c. by the end of 2018, transfer the SNCOs to the e-procurement system, which have organised competitive bidding with a budget exceeding AMD 200 mln;
 - d. by the end of 2019, transfer the communities to the e-procurement system, which have organised competitive bidding with a budget exceeding AMD 200 mln;
 - e. by the end of 2020, transfer community non-commercial organisations and organisations with more than 50% of community shares to e-procurement system, which have organised competitive bidding with a budget exceeding AMD 200 mln;
- (2) to strengthen the “value for money” principle and to introduce an efficient toolkit for public accountability, shift to quantitative and qualitative result-based indicators for programmes, financed from the RA State Budget. Particularly:
 - a. by the end of 2017, complement the methodological base for programme budgeting;
 - b. prepare the RA State Budgets for the year 2019 and the next years and submit them to the RA Parliament in the programme budgeting format;
- (3) by the end of 2019, automate the process of calculation of budget programme expenditures and link with operating electronic systems (e-treasury,

procurement, etc.);

- (4) consolidate SNCOs and accounts, in particular:
 - a. by the end of 2018, increase the transparency and efficiency of SNCOs, by keeping their accounts in the treasury;
 - b. by the end of 2019, apply the *ex-ante* control system for the accounts of SNCOs, as it is currently in place for state and community budget execution;
- (5) undertake measures for strengthening the internal financial control and internal audit institutes in the public sector, in particular, by the end of 2019, ensure basis for external assessment of the quality of internal audit and carry out a pilot implementation;
- (6) raise the level of public sector financial accountability and discipline, the RA Government plans to implement the second phase of introduction of the new system of public sector accounting, specifically:
 - a. by the end of 2018, set up a new system of public sector accounting and pilot-test it in one RA Ministry;
 - b. set the procedures for preparing consolidated financial statements at the level of ministries, specifically during 2018-2025 introduce in at least 5 ministries a new system, which will be based on the results of the pilot testing.
- 5. In order to increase the efficiency of the toolkit for financial markets and to develop a platform for introduction of long-term pension savings, the RA Government will undertake steps jointly with the Central Bank of Armenia (CBA) to streamline the accumulated funds to the real sector of the RA economy. This will be a stimulus for the development of the RA economy and the increase of the investments. For this purpose, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2018, together with the CBA, develop capital market development programme that will aim at promoting issuance of shares and securities by local companies;
- (2) by the end of 2019, together with the CBA, increase the accessibility of financial services by means of implementing necessary legal regulations;
- (3) to expand the pension system by the end of 2020, together with the CBA, develop a medium-term development programme for the insurance market that will aim at introducing new insurance toolkits and life insurance system.

3.3. TAX AND CUSTOMS SYSTEMS

Tax and customs systems shall be efficient and shall have necessary capacity to cut down the shadow economy and improve the business environment. As a result of efficient tax and customs administration, sustainability of tax revenues shall be ensured, thus planning an increase of the Tax-to-GDP ratio by 2.5 percentage points in the upcoming 5 years, taking into account the trends of economic development in the upcoming years.

As a result of consistent administration to be carried out by tax and customs authorities, fight against delinquent taxpayers, who intentionally fail to meet tax obligations, should be intensified, the activities for complete documentation of transactions in the economy should further continue. In this respect, the main approach is such that tax and customs control tools should apply solely to dishonest taxpayers, whereas the ongoing inspection control by tax authorities shall be transferred to the electronic control platform.

From the perspective of business environment, possible simplification of administrative procedures for taxpayers and economic entities engaged in foreign economic activity, improvement of the quality of services provided to the taxpayers, as a result of reforms in the state revenue administration, shall be emphasised. Meantime, in

parallel to developing administrative tools for raising the efficiency of management of cash flows of economic entities, taxation on imports of raw materials and equipment on the border shall be gradually shifted from the border to the domestic economy.

Confidence in the tax and customs systems will increase as a result of exercising activities towards aforementioned directions, reorganisation of tax and customs systems, changing of the image of tax and customs officers.

In order to achieve the mentioned targets, it is necessary to clearly define the directions of tax and customs systems reforms, which will correctly reflect the ways to achieve defined goals. The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to raise the efficiency of tax and customs control, the RA Government plans to arrange control processes through introduction and improvement of risk assessment systems, thus creating a set of tools to reveal shadow turnover and limit opportunities for tax evasion. Within the scope of activities to be implemented to this end, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2018, as appropriate, regulate the types and amounts of tax, customs, administrative, criminal liabilities and, for the offences, define the sanctions based on the gravity and the damage caused;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, conduct continuous activities towards complete documentation of transactions in the economy;
 - (3) during 2018-2022, single out target taxpayers groups as a result of sectoral analyses, arrange individual group meetings, present to them activity-specific risks, discuss the problems and according to the agreements reached as a result, individually apply the set of administrative tools for tax control over those economic entities, who failed to undertake some steps toward increasing the tax compliance;

- (4) by the end of 2022, organise tax control process by means of improving risk assessment system, thus ensuring consistent cut down of the ratio of the number of inspections carried out by the tax authority and the number of taxpayers;
 - (5) by the end of 2022, improve the system of customs control by means of increasing the efficiency of risk assessment systems, ensuring reduction of the time spent on customs clearance;
 - (6) by the end of 2018, introduce a “Blue Channel” for customs control, gradually shifting the border control to the post-clearance phase;
 - (7) to reveal and prevent cases of tax evasion, improve and expand the systems of provision and exchange of information, in particular, by the end of 2022, expand the scope of 3rd party information and improve the quality, improve electronic systems of their exchange and processing.
2. In order to improve analytical and risk assessment processes, conducted in the system of SRC, adjunct to the RA Government, as well as to replace the ongoing inspection control of taxpayers’ activities with electronic control, analytical capacity of tax and customs authorities shall be improved and expanded, thus ensuring interconnection between the results of analytical work, risk management systems and control measures. Within the scope of activities conducted to this end, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, centralise the analyses conducted in the SRC in the monitoring centre, thus improving the quality of analytical and risk identification processes and ensuring maximum automation and uniformity of analyses for risk assessment;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, launch the electronic system for desk audit.

3. In order to establish a favourable tax and customs environment for compliant taxpayers, to expand the activities aimed at achieving partnership relations with taxpayers, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) define additional concessional terms in tax and customs for compliant taxpayers in order to create a more favourable environment for compliant taxpayers. In particular, by the end of 2018, the term for refund of VAT overpayments by compliant taxpayers will be reduced;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, introduce horizontal monitoring system defined by the RA Tax Code, thus strengthening partnership relations with taxpayers;
4. In order to ensure application of the new EAEU Customs Code, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2018, develop the norms ensuring the application of national legislation resulting from the EAEU Customs Code and engage in the process of drafting legal acts that form part of EAEU Law;
 - (2) during 2017-2019, harmonise the e-management and control system (and launch new subsystems) in customs authorities with the EAEU Customs Code and other legal acts supporting its application.
5. In the long-term perspective, the tax administration reforms shall prioritise automation of processes, conducted by the tax authority, including provision of modern, high-quality services to the taxpayers, which, in its turn, will stimulate the increase of the level of voluntary compliance with tax liabilities by taxpayers and will cut down the expenditures that taxpayers make to meet the requirements of administration. Within the scope of activities implemented to this end, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, develop the capacities of tax and customs authorities in e-management systems, thus providing an opportunity to electronically submit

all the calculations, documents to the tax authority, including digitising all the changes resulting from the Tax Code;

- (2) by the end of 2018, operate the single treasury account system;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, introduce an automatic system of calculation of turnover tax;
 - (4) during 2017-2022, expand the system of notification about the problems that arise during taxpayers' operation, mostly through the electronic system;
 - (5) by the end of 2019, operate the e-system for payment of taxes.
6. Among the complex activities for improvement of tax and customs administration, implementation of large-scale activities to ensure transparency of tax and customs authorities, raising the awareness of economic entities on their rights and obligations is specifically emphasised. The implemented activities shall result in increasing tax and customs compliance, which, in its turn, will help to properly meet the tax liabilities by the taxpayers and will ensure tax revenues. Within the scope of activities implemented to this end, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2018, improve the capacities of rendering services to taxpayers and the call centre;
 - (2) during 2017-2018, improve the unified standards for rendering services to taxpayers, ensuring their publicity;
 - (3) during 2017-2022, undertake measures to continuously improve taxpayers awareness raising and training system;
 - (4) during 2017-2022, broadcast series of TV programmes on tax compliance through which the population will regularly be informed about revealed tax offences, applied sanctions, and achieved results;

- (5) during 2017-2022, within the scope of raising the efficiency of tax authority-taxpayer collaboration:
 - a. involve taxpayers in the processes of organising of tax and customs administration;
 - b. organise, through websites, inquiries to get the assessment of the population on the procedures of tax and customs administration;
 - (6) during 2017-2022, publish reports on the operation of tax and customs authorities (including on departmental control);
 - (7) by the end of 2019, create opportunities for electronic submission of information on the expenditures made on the account of taxes paid by taxpayers.
7. As a result of changes in the structure of tax and customs systems, it is planned to define an optimal organisation of the system, which will enable to have clarity in all the levels of management and avoid duplications. Tax (territorial) inspectorates shall be reorganised, defining functions-based structure. Modern human resource management system (HRMS) will be one of the cornerstones of this system through changing the image of tax and customs officers. Within the scope of activities implemented to this end, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2018, to change the image and requirements for tax and customs officers:
 - a. elaborate the RA Law on making amendments to the RA Law on Tax Service and the RA Law on Customs Service;
 - b. revise the rules of conduct for tax and customs officers;
 - (2) during 2017-2018, introduce an automated information system for human resource management, ensuring modernisation of implementation of HR functions and to increase the efficiency of work;

- (3) by the end of 2018, develop and introduce a model of educational needs assessment for raising professional skills and working capacity of tax and customs officers;
- (4) during 2017-2022, develop and conduct training and retraining programmes for tax and customs officers;
- (5) during 2017-2022, reveal the risks and revise procedures to reduce corruption risks in tax and customs.

3.4. ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURES AND NATURAL RESOURCES ENERGY

Energy

The Energy Policy of the RA Government is aimed at ensuring energy independence and enhancing the energy security of Armenia, ensuring regional integration and sustainable development of the energy sector based on further development of nuclear energy, diversification of the supply of energy sources and full and efficient use of local (renewable) energy resources, as well as implementation of modern energy-efficient tools and introduction of new technologies.

At present, the energy system fully covers the internal market demand for electric power and retains some export potential. Given the needs of the internal market and aiming to take advantage of trade opportunities with Georgia and Iran, the RA Government has undertaken phase-by-phase liberalisation of the electric power market of Armenia.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. With a view to ensuring the energy independence of Armenia by seeking new markets for trading in the region and leading a policy of active import and export, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2017, develop an action plan for liberalisation of the electricity market for further development of cross-border electricity trade, with the core objective to shift from the model of fully regulated power market to the liberalised market model: application of contemporary rules of trade, further improvement of tariff regulation and promotion of cross-border trade are the key priorities of the mentioned action plan, along with prioritising the protection of consumers' rights in the domestic market;
 - (2) by the end of 2020, elaborate the draft of the new RA Law on Energy, taking into account the international best practice, as well as the challenges encountered in the process of implementing the new power market model and the electricity trading mechanisms;
 - (3) by the end of 2021, develop a long-term development programme for the power system of Armenia for the upcoming ten-year period, which must cover the implemented activities and the actual developments in the power system before 2021.
2. With a view to creating legal incentives for introducing modern high-end technologies, to ensure a policy aimed at developing the energy sector and implementing energy-efficiency measures, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, develop drafts of the RA Laws on Making Amendments to the RA Laws On Energy, On Licensing and On State Duty, in order to promote the phase-by phase liberalisation of the wholesale and retail power market;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, revise the 2014-2020 Action Plan for Implementation of the Provisions of the Energy Security Concept of Armenia and implementation schedule, aiming to improve compliance with the requirements for the energy security in Armenia;
 - (3) by the end of 2017, elaborate a draft legal act that will regulate the processes related to normal functioning of power generating stations from renewable

- energy sources, the safety of citizens and the operational personnel, and to the protection of property;
- (4) during 2018-2022, carry out continued measures to promote introduction and development of modern high-end technologies.
3. With a view to extending the service design life time of the second power unit of the Armenian NPP and to retrofitting it, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, complete the additional instrumental investigation of the equipment and systems of the second power unit of the Armenian NPP, as prescribed under the programme for extension of the service life-cycle of the second power unit of the Armenian NPP, and complete the supply of the equipment in accordance with the schedule;
- (2) during 2018-2019, carry out the actions of the completion phase under the programme for retrofit and extension of the service life-cycle of the second power unit of the Armenian NPP;
- (3) by the end of 2019, fulfil the Programme for extension of the service life-cycle of the second power unit of the Armenian NPP, which will enable efficient and safe operation of the Armenian NPP during the additional operation period.
4. In order to implement the projects on the construction of the Armenia-Iran and Armenia-Georgia 400 kV overhead power transmission lines, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) within the scope of the project on the construction of Iran-Armenia 400 kV overhead power transmission line:
- a. during 2017-2018, carry out installation of utility poles and overhead power transmission lines and construction of the substation;
- b. by the end of 2019, put into operation the power transmission line and the substation;

(2) within the scope of the project on the construction of Armenia-Georgia 400 kV overhead power transmission line:

- a. by the end of 2017, initiate the design works;
- b. by the end of 2019, complete the project on the construction of Armenia-Georgia 400 kV overhead power transmission line.

After the construction and putting into operation the overhead power transmission lines, the Republic of Armenia will be positioned in the region as a regional hub for electric power, linking the electric energy systems of Iran, Georgia and Russia.

- 5. To implement the project on the construction of utility scale solar power plants, the RA Government plans, by the end of 2018, to summarise the results of tender announced for construction of a solar photovoltaic (PV) power plant of 55 MW peak capacity in the Masrik area and to ensure the launch of construction of the PV power plant.
- 6. During 2017-2022, the RA Government plans to support private projects on the construction of wind power plants by developing new legal incentives as well.
- 7. If the geothermal resources in the area called "Karkar" are proven in terms of economic profitability, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) design an investment project for the construction of the power plant for attracting private investors and holding a tender, in particular:
 - a. by the end of 2017, conduct a feasibility study for potential geothermal power plant based on the already conducted drilling works to identify the parameters of the primary energy source, and summarise the results;
 - b. by the end of 2018, in case of positive conclusion regarding the feasibility of constructing the power plant based on the findings of the geothermal exploration drilling project, design an investment project for construction of the geothermal power plant, and by the end of 2019, hold a tender to attract investors.

Natural Resources

The mining sector of the Republic of Armenia must be transparent and highly accountable to the public. If the natural resources are managed efficiently and transparently, the country may gain economic benefits that will support economic growth.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. To facilitate sustainable development of the mining sector, as well as to create a new regulatory framework for the policy in the sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, adopt the Mining Sector Development Concept Paper, and approve the list of actions ensuring the execution thereof;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, within the framework of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), prepare and publish the first national report of Armenia on activities implemented in the mining sector and design the road map for disclosure of beneficial ownership;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, design the Mining Sector Development Strategy and Action Plan;
 - (4) during 2019-2020, put in place legal and institutional regulations in line with the Mining Sector Development Strategy.
2. To digitise the passports of mineral mines and exposures, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, digitalise and upload available data on www.geo-fund.am, making this information available on-line for all potential investors.

Water Economy

The 5-year programme proposed for the water economy will feature continuation of the development and reforms in the water economy system, ensuring an adequate basis for financial sustainability, through the introduction of new management structures facilitating self-sustained and economically independent operation of the infrastructures and institutions in the sector, improving the legislation governing the water sector in terms of hydrologic systems and continued institutional reforms.

The activities of the RA Government in the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. To address the issues persisting in the drinking water sector and to improve the situation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) address the problems related to the supply of drinking water, in particular:
 - a. during 2017-2019, repair the supply network in different communities of the city of Yerevan to reduce leakages, ensure water delivery;
 - b. improve the water supply and water removal services in the settlements covered by the service area managed under the Lease Contract and secure annual revenues to the RA State Budget in the amount of AMD 19 063.5 million for upcoming 5.5 years;
 - c. ensure implementation of mandatory capital works funded by the Lessee, in the amount of AMD 11 billion for the upcoming 5 years;
 - d. reduce non-revenue water by 12-13% for upcoming 5 years, and by 30% in the during contract years;
 - e. implement a government investment programme to improve and develop the assets, in the amount of around 150 million Euros;
 - (2) undertake actions to set up a service area of the specialised entity under SCWE to deliver water supply and removal services to the 560 settlements not

covered by the service area, including:

- a. by the end of 2017, design a framework for delivering water supply and removal services to unserved settlements;
 - b. by the end of 2017, complete the construction of the mechanical treatment plant of Yerevan Aeration Station, and by the end of 2019, complete the construction of Sevan and Metsamor wastewater treatment plants;
 - c. by the end of 2017, review and amend the strategy for drinking water;
 - d. by the end of 2018, introduce more effective tools of mutually beneficial collaboration under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in the unserved area;
 - e. during 2018-2022, address the issues of disproportionate distribution and accessibility of drinking water resources in Shirak, Aragatsotn, Armavir, Lori, Vayots Dzor, Gegharkunik and Syunik Marzes of Armenia, as well as by the end of 2018, carry out the design works for water supply and water removal in 560 settlements in the specified territories and by the end of 2020 launch the civil works.
2. To address the challenges persisting in the irrigation sector and to improve the situation, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2019, ensure replacement of pump irrigation systems with gravity system and replacement of the main and secondary canals with new ones through implementation of investment projects for rehabilitation, repair and upgrade of the irrigation systems;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, implement reservoir construction projects, including:
 - a. by the end of 2018, conduct a feasibility study of the Selav-Mastara reservoir and the study for preparing the initial design of the construction;

- b. by the end of 2022, complete the construction of the Vedi reservoir and irrigation system;
 - c. by the end of 2022, complete the construction of the Kapsi reservoir and the gravity irrigation system;
- (3) implement legal and institutional reforms in the irrigation sector, in particular:
- a. by the end of 2017, develop a financial recovery plan for the irrigation system;
 - b. by the end of 2017, develop an action plan for improving the metering system in the irrigation sector;
 - c. by the end of 2017, elaborate the draft RA Law on Making Amendments to the RA Law "On adoption of the annual and complex programmes of activities for rehabilitation, protection, reproduction and use of Lake Sevan Eco System";
 - d. by the end of 2019, elaborate the draft RA Law on Irrigation Water, to regulate "WUA-land user-farmer" legal relations, clarify the role of irrigation water in development of agriculture, add new irrigable lands, and create a basis for changing the management, administrative and legal status of companies;
 - e. by the end of 2019, develop a concept paper on improving the quality of services delivered in the irrigation water sector;
 - f. by the end of 2019, carry out extensive repair of broken sections of "Arpa-Sevan" Tunnel No 2;
 - g. by the end of 2021, design the irrigation and watering standards for low flow and middle flow water yield, based on land profile;
- (4) by the end of 2017, design a flood management and prevention plan, also by

defining annual priority anti-flood actions;

- (5) during 2017-2022, carry out annual works to improve the ameliorative condition of wet (waterlogged) lands of agricultural and economic relevance;
- (6) by the end of 2021, put in place a system for enhancing the irrigation efficiency, reducing water losses, ensuring water saving, enhancing the crop yield, increasing irrigable lands, and on-line transparent management of water through new technologies, remote sensing information management system;
- (7) enhance controllability in terms of assessing the technical, financial and physical condition of hydro technical structures, clarification of water metering, identification of water losses and reduction of electricity consumption, in particular:
 - a. by the end of 2018, assess the technical condition of pump water production equipment by reequipping (replacing) the contemporary management systems;
 - b. by the end of 2019, take inventory of the hydro technical structures and carry out audit;
 - c. by the end of 2020, furnish the irrigation systems with hydrometrical observation points equipped with SCADA software.

Nuclear Safety

The goal of the long-term programme of the State Nuclear Safety Regulatory Committee adjunct to the RA Government is to enhance the nuclear and radiation safety of atomic energy utilisation facilities and reduce the risk of activities implemented in the field of utilisation of atomic energy.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to improve the nuclear legislation, the RA Government plans to develop, during 2017-2019, a new RA Law on Safe Utilisation of Atomic Energy for Peaceful Purposes, which will enter into force from 2020.
2. In order to license the design lifetime extension of the ANPP Unit No 2 for its safe operation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, conduct an assessment of the justification on the ANPP Unit No 2 residual lifetime;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, grant licences and permissions for implementation of safety improvement measures at the ANPP Unit No 2;
 - (3) by the end of 2021, extend the operating licence of ANPP Unit No 2 until 2026.
3. Licensing of the activities envisaged under the strategy and concept paper on safe management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste.
4. In order to perform environmental radiation monitoring, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) establish a reference laboratory for radiation measurements, particularly:
 - a. by the end of 2018, allocate a space to the State Nuclear Safety Regulatory Committee adjunct to the RA Government and renovate it;
 - b. during 2018-2021, obtain modern and certified laboratory devices, equipment, methodologies, sampling tools, individual protection means, diesel generator and office furniture within the framework of technical co-operation projects;
 - c. during 2018-2022, recruit, train and retrain specialists,
 - (2) during 2018-2020, implement the "RODOS" operating system that supports decision making in nuclear and radiological emergencies.

3.5. AGRICULTURE

The aim of the Republic of Armenia Government Programme in agriculture is to increase the gross product of the sector by at least 5% annually, to enhance the level of food security (the self-sufficiency level of the main food, assessed by energy value, will reach around 75% in 2022), to develop high value agriculture, to introduce modern technologies, to substitute imports, as well as to increase export volumes and to create favourable conditions for the activities of economic entities in the agricultural sector.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. To develop the plant breeding sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2022, strengthen the capacities of seed breeding, seed production and seed selection stations and enhance their network. Continue the seed quality control and seed testing state programme;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, in order to ensure sustainable yield, implement plant protection measures, subsequently reducing significantly the damage caused by pests;
 - (3) during 2018-2022, implement the project for accessibility of a wide variety of fertilisers to agricultural land users at affordable prices;
 - (4) by the end of 2017, develop and, during 2018-2022, implement in the RA the state support programme for cultivation of intensive orchards through modern technologies, as well as plant 100 hectares of intensive orchards by the end of 2018.
2. In order to ensure long-term solutions for stabilising and developing animal husbandry, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2017, acquire pedigree heifers of local reproduction and supply them to cattle breeding farms for deferred payment, envisaging clear standards and refund mechanisms regarding the spent funds;
 - (2) during 2018-2022, double the supply of pedigree heifers of local reproduction;
 - (3) establish and develop pedigree farms, particularly:
 - a. by the end of 2017, elaborate a programme for establishment and development of pedigree farms;
 - b. during 2018-2022, establish 4 pedigree farms in collaboration with the private sector.
3. For sustainable development and regulation of the fish breeding sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2018, develop a strategy along with the introduction of state support mechanisms for the establishment of modern, export-oriented fish-breeding farms.
4. In order to ensure stable anti-epizootic situation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2022, implement a programme for farm animal vaccination and veterinary measures, as well as make, by the end of 2017, about 6 million preventive vaccinations and undertake diagnostic measures.
5. In order to introduce a geographical data digitisation system, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2018, implement the pilot phase of the project by introducing a full geographical data digitisation system for one marz of the RA;
 - (2) during 2018-2019, achieve the goal of introducing the geographical data digitisation system for 9 more marzes of the RA;

- (3) during 2017-2022, implement an action plan for soil agro-chemical research and fertility improvement activities.
- 6. Regarding the farm cooperative promotion, the RA Government plans to implement, during 2018-2022, a state programme for support to cooperatives.
- 7. In order to modernise the farm machinery stocks, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2022, implement a state support leasing program for farm machinery in the RA, as well as supply farm machinery for around AMD 3 billion by the end of 2017 with a 2% annual interest rate;
 - (2) during 2017-2021, implement in collaboration with the private sector, a project for the establishment of farm machinery stations. The pilot project will be launched in 2017, along with autumn sowing.
- 8. In order to introduce state-of-the-art technologies in the agricultural sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2018-2022, implement a project for subsidising the interest rates of loans provided for introducing drip irrigation systems, by installing drip irrigation systems on a total area of about 10.0 thousand ha;
 - (2) during 2018-2022, implement a state support programme for introduction of anti-hail networks in the RA agriculture upon affordable conditions and with application of interest rate subsidising mechanisms for targeted loans.
- 9. In order to support the agricultural processing industry, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2018-2022, implement a programme for subsidising the loans in the agri-processing sector for the purpose of procurement (purchase) of agricultural raw materials;
 - (2) increase the rating and competitiveness of wine making, particularly:

- a. by the end of 2018, propose a state duty and excise tax rates calculation method by retaining the annual flows into the RA State Budget;
 - b. during 2017-2019, bring the local standards and criteria for the quality of wine in line with the international requirements.
- 10. In order to increase the level of loan accessibility and targeting in the agricultural sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2022, continue the State Support Programme for providing target loans to the agricultural sector by setting the most favourable interest rate for borderline community farms eligible for social support, as well as provide loans of about AMD 7 billion with a 5% interest rate by the end of 2017.
- 11. In order to introduce an agricultural insurance system, the RA Government plans to implement, during 2018-2020, through state support, a pilot programme for introducing an insurance system in the agricultural sector.
- 12. In order to efficiently utilise the natural pastures, to improve the field fodder production, to increase productivity in animal husbandry, to promote agricultural co-operation, to develop production capacities and value chain, the RA Government plans to continue, during 2017-2020, the second project for community agricultural resource management and competitiveness aiming at the increase of agricultural production volumes in the farms and at the increase of production capacities of local producers and processors.
- 13. In the forestry sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop a programme for improvement of forest protection services and increase of control and forest management efficiency, and to ensure the programme implementation during 2018-2022;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, implement a new state forest monitoring programme by introducing modern technologies.

Food Safety

Ensuring quality changes for the food safety system development in the Republic of Armenia requires consistently help on increasing the efficiency in the operation of the food safety system within the country through modernisation of food safety capacities and quality infrastructures.

State control in the above-mentioned sectors should make a transition to the organisation and performance of activities in compliance with risk identification and prevention principles based on the introduced risk assessment and management system, in the meantime, ensuring reduced administration, transparency, and production of such food that is safe for the life and health of the consumer and complies with the top quality standards applicable in the international practice.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In regard to ensuring the fulfilment of the requirement for introducing food safety and quality management systems among food chain operators and the ongoing strengthening of state control, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, carry out activities to raise awareness about the introduction of quality management systems among food chain operators;
 - (2) during 2018-2022, perform phase-by-phase introduction of quality management systems by sectors, with a particular focus on quality inspection of various types of exported product.
2. Regarding issuance of sanitary passports to food transporting vehicles, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, introduce sanitary passport issuance mechanisms for food transporting vehicles;

- (2) during 2018-2022, implement phase-by-phase issuance of sanitary passports for vehicles, and gradually impose sanctions on value chain operators transporting food products by vehicles without sanitary passports.
- 3. In regard to ensuring mandatory slaughter in the sector of meat sale and purchase, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) starting from 2017, make a phase-by-phase transition to mandatory slaughter;
 - (2) during 2018-2019, develop and introduce mechanisms for control over slaughter houses, for improvement of administration and enhancement of effectiveness with regard to veterinary and sanitary expertise and meat branding.
- 4. In order to introduce a digitised system for farm animal identification, registration and numbering, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, carry out activities for the development and preparation of the programme for farm animal registration and numbering;
 - (2) during 2018-2020, introduce a digitised system and ensure risk identification and infectious diseases monitoring control for farm animal identification, registration and numbering.
- 5. In order to ensure food safety, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop, by product types and types of activities, a concept paper on introducing a rating scheme for food chain operators, and during 2018-2020, introduce the rating scheme for food chain operators;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, develop a risk assessment model in the food safety sector, and, during 2018-2021, introduce the risk assessment model and apply risk management mechanisms in the food safety sectors;

- (3) during 2017-2019, increase the level of food safety laboratory control and develop the food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary laboratory service system;
6. Regarding the simplification of administration applicable to the quality of imported food, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, introduce a one-stop-shop system for border control;
- (2) by the end of 2018, review and simplify import and export procedures and the risk exposure methodology in such processes;
- (3) during 2018-2022, simplify administration in cases of importing certain food products from countries exercising high-level control on product and quality management systems, as well as reduce the time limits.

3.6. TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Development of the transport, communication and information technologies sector of Armenia will be aimed at:

- ensuring the citizen's right to free movement, accessibility and competitiveness of transportation, goods and services within the transport sector, through the use of sustainably developing transport infrastructures and provided services;
- ensuring a refined system for the roads economy management system, significantly improved roads quality and safety;
- ensuring improvement, dynamic development of the ICT and communication sector infrastructures, creation of new jobs and promotion of entrepreneurial activities, promotion of employment of the population, entrepreneurship and commensurate territorial development;

- ensuring modernisation of the postal communication system, accessibility and affordability of universal services for quality postal communication, introduction of new services, including postal banking, electronic postal services;
- ensuring purposefulness and efficiency enhancement of state expenditures, modernisation of financial control and management mechanisms, due to which services in transport, communication and information technologies sectors will be accessible, affordable and effective for Armenian citizens and the business community throughout the RA territory, and the management will be modern and transparent.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to ensure a citizen's right to free movement, accessibility and competitiveness of transportation, goods and services within the transport sector, through the use of sustainably developing transport infrastructures and provided services, as well as to increase service quality and transport safety through sustainable development of transport infrastructures and provided services in the transport sector, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) create a unified route network in the RA territory for passenger transportations by road, particularly:
 - a. by the end of 2018, develop a concept paper and an action plan for introducing the unified route network, including the mechanisms for transport services pricing, balancing and compensating (subsidising) transport costs and revenues;
 - b. by the end of 2019, engage a private operator (operators) for the unified route network, as well as attract private investments;

- c. by the end of 2020, develop a unified interactive transport map of the RA territory, the electronic management and unified ticket system, and by the end of 2022, implement the entire system;
 - d. by the end of 2020, privatise the bus stations system (without the right to alter the functional purpose of the bus stations system) for system modernisation, technological saturation, increase in management efficiency and quality of provided services, geographical expansion of the services through the attraction of private investments, and during 2021-2022, implement the system modernisation programme;
 - e. by the end of 2022, ensure accessibility of passenger transportation by road to all the RA communities;
- (2) ensure transport safety, in particular:
- a. by the end of 2017, regulate the technical inspection process of vehicles and implement the electronic system;
 - b. by the end of 2017, regulate the exploitation of vehicles furnished with gas pressure-fed system;
 - c. by the end of 2018, increase technical saturation of the vehicles of general use by introducing the digital tachograph and other electronic supervision systems to supervise drivers' working hours;
- (3) by the end of 2020, improve the legislation on transportation by taxi, regulate the activities of taxi services operating on the electronic platform and the traditional taxi services, and create incentives to modernise the rolling stock;
- (4) develop alternative transport routes, particularly:
- a. by the end of 2020, develop alternative safe programmes for passenger and cargo transportation, from and to the RA, and promote their development. Agree on more favourable transportation regimes with

- transit countries via bilateral and multilateral agreements;
 - b. by the end of 2022, create “dry port” legislative environment to develop multimodal transportations; promote the development of logistic centres and expand the transit capacities of the RA;
- (5) develop the railway transport, particularly:
- a. by the end of 2018, develop and adopt a railway infrastructure development strategy;
 - b. by the end of 2022, modernise the passenger-carrying rolling stock.
2. In order to refine the roads economy management system and to significantly improve road quality and safety, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) improve road assets management, particularly:
- a. by the end of 2017, develop a road strategy;
 - b. by the end of 2018, introduce a unified assets management system, including through long- term road service and exploitation agreements;
 - c. by the end of 2018, take inventory of, map and digitise the RA road network;
 - d. by the end of 2018, review and toughen the requirements set for civil works at protective and alienation zones of the inter-state and republican roads in the RA;
 - e. by the end of 2018, develop legislation on alternative toll roads in the RA;
- (2) promote quality improvement, efficiency increase of road construction works, and commensurate territorial development through the activities stated below:
- a. by the end of 2022, ensure continuity of the North-South Programme;
 - b. by the end of 2022, ensure at least one road in a good or satisfactory

condition that connects to the relevant interstate roads of the RA communities or the marz centres;

- c. by the end of 2022, ensure increase of the share of interstate, republican and local (marz) roads in a good condition within the RA road networks and improvement of the road furniture;
- d. by the end of 2022, develop major road projects and present those at international platforms to stimulate private investments for the implementation thereof;

(3) ensure road traffic safety, particularly:

- a. by the end of 2017, develop and adopt a 5-year traffic safety programme, and implement it during 2018-2022;
- b. by the end of 2020, develop and implement a new dislocation scheme to furnish the interstate and republican roads in the RA with road signs.

3. In order to ensure improvement, dynamic development of the ICT and communication sector infrastructures, creation of new jobs and promotion of entrepreneurial activities, commensurate territorial development and the ICT security, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2017, develop the ICT sector development strategy in the RA;
- (2) promote formation of a competitive Armenian IT or ICT product brand and to ensure proper presentation of the product in demand in international markets, as well as to stimulate integration into other systems, particularly:
 - a. starting from 2017, carry out complex co-operation measures with the business community in order to identify barriers in the sector and to jointly find ways for solution, implement legislative initiatives for promotion of the ICT sector and improvement of the business environment;

- b. during 2017-2022, develop quality professional capacities in the ICT sector, particularly through the involvement of transnational companies and appropriate capacities at training centres and implement joint programmes;
 - c. ensure effective activities of the technological centres in Gyumri and Vanadzor cities equipped with knowledge-based and innovative infrastructures, and establish new centres by the end of 2019;
 - d. during 2017-2022, promote co-operation between the science and the private sector, commercialise the scientific research results through innovation and business development grant programmes;
- (3) during 2017-2022, expand the application of IT and ICT solutions in all branches of the RA economy, particularly promote the use of the local IT and ICT competitive product;
- (4) develop and create new ICT infrastructures, increasing the efficiency, quality, speed and accessibility of service provision and abilities to integrate into other systems; particularly:
- a. by the end of 2017, develop and adopt the strategy on a basic and mobile radio-monitoring system and implement it during 2018-2022;
 - b. by the end of 2018, create a modern data processing centre based on public-private partnership;
 - c. during 2019-2022, create a unified modern closed inter-agency electronic communication network among the RA state bodies;
- (5) develop and create electronic platforms for the ICT service provision, particularly:
- a. by the end of 2018, operate www.e-ictregister.am electronic systems for Armenian ICT companies, and by the end of 2019, provide

www.e-ictregister.am on-line services based on electronic bases and software solutions;

b. by the end of 2018, digitise archive materials for a three-year period, integrate the digitised materials into the operating automated systems;

(6) by the end of 2017, develop complex measures aimed at increasing confidence, information security, cyber security and data protection by the end of 2017, and to ensure their implementation during 2018-2022.

4. In order to ensure improvement of the postal communication system and attraction of private investments, the RA Government plans to:

(1) by the end of 2018, privatise “HayPost” Closed Joint Stock Company and attract private investments;

(2) during 2018-2021, increase the effectiveness of the postal network infrastructures, improve interaction, ensure accessibility and affordability of universal services of the quality postal communication, define and promote conditions for introducing new services, including postal banking, electronic postal services.

3.7. CIVIL AVIATION

The civil aviation sector of the Republic of Armenia must be efficient, dynamic and flexible to respond to the changes and developments in the air transportation sector globally, as well as to the geopolitical and economic occurrences.

For the sustainable growth in the air transportation sector, it is necessary to ensure a liberalised and comprehensive regulatory framework, predictable business environment, identification of preconditions for the development of the aviation subsectors and implementation of consistent efforts which, in its turn, will contribute to the diversification of the aviation market, enlargement of the air route network,

clarification of the volume of investment needed and identification of their sources, and consistent improvement of professional knowledge and practical skills of the managerial staff in the sector.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. To facilitate accessible air carriage to and from the Republic of Armenia, in particular, to attract low cost carriers, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, improve Shirak airport and develop the infrastructures at the expense of investments from the operator of Shirak airport;
 - (2) by the end of 2020, provide necessary preconditions for expanding the geography of flights and increasing the number of low cost carriers.
2. In order to promote general aviation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop a complex programme for the development of general aviation;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, ensure the creation of necessary preconditions for the functioning of the RA general aviation.
3. As per the increase in the volumes of cargo transportation from the RA, with a view to providing regular cargo transportation from Zvartnots International Airport, by the end of 2018, the RA Government plans to launch regular cargo transportation.
4. In order to revise the existing agreements with partner countries and conclude new agreements, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, prepare for signing the Agreement on Armenia-EU common aviation area;

- (2) after the entry into force of the Agreement, during 2018-2020, finally introduce the corresponding regulations provided for under the Agreement.
5. In order to increase the number of transit flights through the RA airspace, introduce the Free Route Airspace Policy of Armenia and further expand it under the Armenia-Georgia Free Airspace format. To this end, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, introduce the Free Route Airspace Policy — above the Flight Level 290, from 00:00-06:00 — in the RA airspace (hereinafter referred to as the Policy);
 - (2) by the end of 2018, introduce the 24-hour policy in the RA airspace — at heights to the possible extent below Flight Level 290;
 - (3) by the end of 2019, introduce a joint policy with Georgia.

3.8. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The RA Government reinforces its commitment to shape a broad and efficient urban development policy, prioritising the participation of local authorities, the civil society and other stakeholders in transparent and accountable implementation thereof and, thus, in further improvement of the quality of life of the population through urban development measures.

To that end, the RA Government will continue undertaking pro-active measures to enhance the efficiency of urban development, create comprehensive databases of spatial planning and normative-technical documents, as well as a complete information system regarding urban development objects, to improve the attractiveness of the urban development sector for investments and improve the business environment, ensure seismic resilience and safety of buildings and facilities, to regulate the issues of management of apartment buildings.

Meanwhile, measures will be undertaken to consistently implement and fulfil the obligations of the State in relation to settling the housing problem of families left homeless after the 1988 earthquake.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. To improve spatial planning and provide the communities of Armenia with local planning documents by 2021, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) in close collaboration with state bodies, territorial administration bodies and local self-government bodies, replenish the database of master plans and zoning designs of local communities through the development of micro-regional spatial planning documents. Particularly:
 - a. in 2017, develop the micro-regional spatial planning documents for RA Tavush Marz;
 - b. in 2018, develop the micro-regional spatial planning documents for the RA Syunik, Ararat and Vayots Dzor Marzes;
 - c. in 2019, develop the micro-regional spatial planning documents for the RA Armavir, Aragatsotn and Gegharkunik Marzes;
 - d. in 2020, develop the micro-regional spatial planning documents for the RA Kotayk, Lori and Shirak Marzes;
 - (2) in 2021, develop a new RA master plan for organising resettlement and spatial management, summarising the provisions proposed in the micro-regional documents and determining the RA strategy for spatial development until 2030;
 - (3) during 2017-2022, implement a programme of reforms in architectural design and construction activities aimed at regulating architectural and building procedures, and ensuring proper quality of design and construction.

2. To create preconditions for favourable investment climate in the sector of urban development, to support the processes in urban development and to contribute to economic development and creation of new jobs, the RA Government plans to promote implementation of a number of large-scale investment projects during 2017-2021, in particular:
 - (1) the construction investment project in the 33rd block of the city of Yerevan (the area of the existing Firdousi market);
 - (2) the "Old Yerevan" construction investment project in the area of the central avenue of the city of Yerevan, encircled by Abovyan, Pavstos Buzand, Eznik Koghbatsi and Arami streets;
 - (3) construction investment projects in urban development sites under special regulation and in the territories of individual communities (Sevan Peninsula, Jermuk, Gyumri, Dilijan, Goris, Tsakhkadzor, Garni, etc.).
3. To create building products and provide services that are competitive in the construction sector and meet the international standards, increase the availability of modern technologies and technical equipment at construction companies, as well as ensure availability of competitive professionals in the sector, and create a contestable market and favourable business environment in the construction market, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by 2018, update the pricing methodology for building works and develop the principles for calculating the value of a building product;
 - (2) by 2019, set up a structure for retraining and upgrade of qualifications of specialists dealing with activities subject to licensing in the urban development sector, as well as with licensing;
 - (3) support the design and introduction of new technologies and application thereof in the construction sector.

4. In order to ensure the compatibility of Armenian building products and services with those available in the markets of CIS and EEU member states, as well as in the single EU market, and thus to support the increase of export and investment, as well as harmonise the regulatory documents related to the urban development sector with the interstate (regional), international and European instruments and with the standards ensuring the enforcement thereof, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, determine the priority regulatory documents to be developed (adapted), reviewed (including also those aiming to ensure the compliance with the energy saving and energy efficiency standards in apartment buildings);
 - (2) during 2017-2021, implement systematic and consistent efforts to update the priority regulatory documents to be developed (adapted) and revised, in harmony with the interstate, international and European practices;
 - (3) during 2017-2022, enlarge the scientific-technical and experimental laboratories in the construction sector in order to support the development and use of new technologies, and improvement of the quality of design and building works.
5. With a view to ensuring sustainable social and economic development and the national security of Armenia, to reduce seismic risk in buildings and facilities, as well as enhance seismic resilience and safety of these buildings, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) improve the legal framework for safe and effective use of buildings and facilities of various relevance, in particular:
 - a. during 2017-2018, design a procedure for issuing passports to different types of newly built and already existing buildings and constructs by defining the process of investigating the actual technical condition of the

- existing buildings and constructs and issuing technical passports;
- b. and based on the baseline data obtained from this exercise, during 2019-2021, develop and put in place software with the capacity to update the data in permanent mode;
- (2) during 2018-2021, clarify the steps for resettlement of the residents of category 4 emergency apartment buildings and for rehabilitation and retrofit of category 3 emergency apartment buildings, in particular:
- a. with a view to clarifying the number of buildings in emergency categories 3 and 4, conduct a new investigation of the technical condition of these buildings;
 - b. by the end of 2020, develop a priority plan based on the findings of the examination of the technical condition.
6. In order to regulate the issues related to maintenance and operation of the apartment building stock, in the area of regulating the maintenance and safe use of this asset that is highly crucial for the country, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, conceptually revise the legal framework governing condominiums in terms of management of apartment buildings, clarifying the functions ensuing from those;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, define the areas and principles for introducing structured mechanisms of state aid for reconstruction, renovation (also increasing energy-saving and energy-efficiency) of the common shared property of apartment buildings.
7. In order to settle the housing problems of families left homeless in consequence of the earthquake, to complete the State Support Programme for housing provision which was launched in 2008 and is currently in the phase of implementation, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2020, settle the housing problem of those families in rural settlements of the RA Lori, Shirak and Aragatsotn Marzes, which were recognised as beneficiaries of the programme, but whose housing conditions were not improved in the frame of the project.

4. SOCIAL

4.1. EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

Education

The education sector is a crucial precondition for sustainable progress of the country, as well as for the reproduction and development of human capital. Developing a national education system that is in line with regional and global developments is today's imperative. The key objective of educational development is to shape such an advanced education system that fully serves national interests, reflects the relevance of education to future expectations in terms of economic and societal development, enable every citizen to obtain quality education in every phase of his or her life cycle in line with his or her needs, and is driven by needs-based planning, social dialogue and collaboration.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. With a view to ensuring availability and accessibility of preschool education, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop and, starting from 2018, implement the alternative, cost-efficient models of preschool education with special focus on ethnic minorities, rural and borderline communities;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, develop and, during 2019-2021, implement effective mechanisms for financing preschool services;

- (3) by the end of 2018, revise and use the model staff list for preschool education institutions.
2. In order to enhance the quality and accessibility of general education, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) improve the general education content and programmes:
- a. by the end of 2017, develop and, starting from 2018, implement special models for managing schools with small number of student population;
 - b. by the end of 2018, update general education programmes, in particular, introduce elements of financial and entrepreneurship education in general education institutions;
 - c. by the end of 2018, revise the conceptual approaches to teaching mathematics, science, engineering and information technologies, foreign languages;
 - d. starting from 2018, launch introduction of the Ararat Bachelorette in marz education institutions implementing lower secondary education programmes;
 - e. by the end of 2017, develop and, starting from 2018, pilot the introduction of the credit system at the upper secondary level (grades 10-12);
 - f. by the end of 2018, put in place the system (or network) of career orientation centres;
 - g. by the end of 2018, design mechanisms for implementation of extracurricular learning and upbringing programmes;
 - h. during 2017-2022, enlarge the sustainable school meal programme, gradually providing balanced, safe and high-quality nutrition in the whole territory of Armenia;

- i. during 2017-2022, ensure transformation of the system of special schools and the shift to a universal inclusive education system.
3. With a view to putting in place an effective system of teacher training, upgrade and professional advancement, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop and apply new mechanisms for teacher remuneration and incentives, with special focus on teachers in borderline and remote rural communities;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, revise and, starting from 2018, put in place new mechanisms for teacher retraining, attestation and professional advancement.
4. In order to improve the quality of teaching and learning resources and educational materials, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop and, starting from 2018, introduce new criteria and tools for creating new generation textbooks and supporting materials for learning;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, develop and make available to the public printed and on-line educational resources both in Armenian and foreign languages, taking into consideration also the needs of schools in the Diaspora, and the refugees.
5. With a view to improving the building conditions of general education institutions, creating secure and safe setting, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2022, carry out rehabilitation, seismic retrofit of buildings, and where needed, construct new school buildings and facilities, having in mind also the innovative methods of education, the standards of safety and universal access;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, develop and, starting from 2019, introduce standards essential for construction and reconstruction designs of safe school buildings, having in mind the innovative methodology of education, the standards of

safety and universal access.

6. With a view to transforming the school management system, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, design and, starting from 2018, put in place a new system for financing general education institutions;
 - (2) by the end of the first half of 2018, develop a new efficient structure for the general education institutions;
 - (3) by the end of the first half of 2018, develop and apply new criteria and a system for selecting or appointing principals of general education institutions.
7. With a view to enhancing the quality of primary vocational (handicraft) and middle vocational education and ensuring the match with the Armenian labour market demands, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) upgrade vocational education and training (VET) in agriculture:
 - a. by the end of 2019, develop and introduce state educational (qualification) standards and relevant syllabi in VET with mandatory inclusion of the module regarding entrepreneurship.
8. With a view to bringing the fields of study taught in primary and middle vocational education institutions in line with the development areas of the marzes of Armenia and the needs of the labour market, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, establish career guidance units with appropriate specialists at VET institutions;
 - (2) during 2017-2018, investigate the priority sectors of the economy, the future development trends, as well as the ratio of the labour market demand and supply with a view to preparing relevant specialists.

9. In order to consolidate primary vocational education institutions, improve the management and cost-efficiency of VET institutions, the RA Government plans the optimisation (consolidation) of VET institutions during 2017-2018.
10. In order to enhance the quality, efficiency of and access to higher education, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) improve the content base of higher education and the educational process:
 - a. during 2017-2018, develop a sector-specific qualification framework in line with the national qualifications framework of higher education;
 - b. during 2019-2021, review the content and structure of professional education programmes focusing on final learning outcomes — using flexible modular schemes and an individualised model for student achievement;
 - c. during 2019-2021, improve the research and innovative components within MA and PhD education programmes;
 - d. start in 2017 and complete in 2022, the programme accreditation of HEIs.
11. In order to enhance and diversify the process of internationalisation of HEIs, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2022, ensure continued and active involvement of Armenia in the processes taking place in the European Higher Education Area and consistent implementation of the Bologna Process;
 - (2) during 2019-2021, provide "Mobility Windows" learning modules in the structure of the study programmes that enhance the students' chances of mobility.
12. In order to increase the efficiency of the higher education system and the HEIs, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2018, upgrade and launch a unified higher education information management system at the HEI and national levels;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, establish "HEI-research institution-employer" scientific and educational clusters in the field of science and engineering;
 - (3) during 2019-2022, implement a programme aimed at increasing efficiency of the higher education system and the HEIs.
13. In order to improve the functions of financing the system of tertiary education, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, review the mechanisms for state financing of higher education institutions and the principles for granting scholarships and allowances;
 - (2) during 2018-2019, form HEI endowment funds in the system of higher education;
 - (3) starting from 2019, ensure equal opportunities for all layers of the population to receive higher education, by increasing the number of students receiving full or partial scholarships from the State, with the focus on the fields of study in the priority areas and the vulnerable student groups.
14. In 2017, with a view to improving the legal framework in the higher education sector, the RA Government plans to submit the draft RA Law on Higher Education to the RA National Assembly.
15. During 2018-2020, continue working with private investors to establish engineering laboratories in the Armenian general education system.

Science

The field of science in the Republic of Armenia must be an internationally competitive

system, integrated with the international research area, promoting excellence in fundamental and applied scientific research, contributing to increased competitiveness of the Armenian economy and to ensuring its security.

To achieve those objectives, it is essential to implement reforms in the field of science with increased efficiency of resource utilisation and introduction of appropriate criteria in line with the clear, modern requirements for evaluating the efficiency.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to further improve the management system in the fields of science and technology, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, bring the RA Law on Scientific and Scientific-Technological Activities, regulating the scientific and technological sector into compliance with contemporary standards;
 - (2) during 2017-2018, develop and implement optimisation and structural reforms programme in science;
 - (3) in 2018, design and implement the mechanisms for evaluating the efficiency of performance of scientific organisations and for reconciling the volume of government funding and performance.
2. In order to put in place an effective system of reproduction of scientific manpower, to upgrade the science infrastructure, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, elaborate the drafts of instruments and relevant legal acts to limit the working age in administrative positions at scientific organisations to 70 years of age;
 - (2) during 2017-2018, develop the concept paper for introduction of a degree awarding system compatible with the scientific degree awarding system in place in the European countries, and undertake actions;

- (3) by the end of 2018, develop and introduce a programme for engaging young human capital in the field of science;
 - (4) during 2018-2022, implement programmes to reintegrate scientific and/or academic manpower into the field of science.
3. For efficient use of resources in the field of science, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2022, implement programmes of dual relevance and focused on issues of defence;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, implement applied scientific and technological projects, also based on the needs of the economy, jointly with the private sector, on co-financing basis;
 - (3) during 2018-2020, concentrate resources in scientific research areas, based on the needs of the economy and in line with international standards.
4. In order to create a system with synergies among education, science, technology and innovation, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2018, design the mechanisms for creating favourable economic environment for scientific organisations, and incentives for attracting the private sector in the financing of these organisations;
 - (2) during 2018-2022, create scientific, academic, technological excellence centres in a certain field of technology with groundbreaking progress potential;
 - (3) assist in creating and enhancing, through the Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology (FAST), a well-balanced setting for technological innovations in Armenia.
5. In order to promote research in Armenian studies, the RA Government plans to ensure advanced development of research in Armenian studies, as well as enhance the level of international co-operation.

4.2. LABOUR AND SOCIAL POLICY

The labour and social protection policies will be aimed at the full realisation of citizens' social rights with a view to providing new quality services by applying up-to-date methods and transparent mechanisms.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to create real opportunities for self-sustainable income generation for socially insecure families and to discourage the households from being dependent on public benefits, during 2017-2022, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) make a transition to a proactive policy of social protection with the introduction of an integrated social services system. Choosing types of social services provided to beneficiaries will be based on their real needs rather than their "claims";
 - (2) recognise the establishment and development of the institution of social work as a priority from the perspective of operational support:
 - a. by the end of 2019, to introduce a social worker certification system based on a qualification credit scale;
 - b. by the end of 2020, to ensure regular process of providing integrated social services by introducing a methodology for social behaviour and providing a comprehensive and objective framework for assessing family vulnerability.
 - (3) with a view to ensuring balanced territorial development by maximising community involvement:
 - a. by the end of 2018, to develop local social programmes through community social needs assessment;

- b. by the end of 2019, to determine the priority of the local social programme and ensure fund-raising for the project;
 - c. by the end of 2020, to transfer the territorial centres for integrated social services to the communities.
 - (4) introduce alternative mechanisms for providing social protection services, in particular:
 - a. by the end of 2018, to launch the Foodbank Project in co-operation with the international institutions and NGOs;
 - b. by the end of 2019, to define criteria for the selection of projects in the social protection sector subject to delegation, and assess the results;
 - (5) give priority to unemployed persons from socially vulnerable families in state employment programmes for 2017-2022.
2. Emphasising the importance of ensuring the conditions for the exercise of the right to decent work, especially from the point of view of consistent reduction in the number of working poor, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) initiate radical changes to the Labour Code of the Republic of Armenia in line with contemporary European trends, in particular:
 - a. during 2017-2018, to eliminate stringent regulations on salary increments and employee compensation benefits in parallel to development of social partnership and collective bargaining at all levels;
 - b. by the end of 2018, to institute the legal basis for the establishment and development of voluntary work;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, continue increasing the minimum monthly salary in line with the goals set out in the RA Government Programme;

- (3) during 2018-2022, improve the unified system for remuneration of officials holding state positions with the aim of ensuring proportionate growth of salaries;
- (4) enhance the integrity of state policy on sustainable employment, in particular:
 - a. during 2018-2020, introduce new programmes aimed at improving the socio-demographic situation of the Republic of Armenia, preventing emigration, raising the level of competitiveness of young people and persons with disabilities in the labour market, involving young and competent professionals in the field of public administration and effectively replenishing employers' vacancies;
 - b. by the end of 2019, create an effective and comprehensive e-governance system in order to increase the transparency and efficiency of the current and prospective labour market regulation and enhance the quality and accessibility of state employment services and programmes.
- 3. In the area of child protection reform, building on the principle "every child should grow up in the family", the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during the period of implementation of the RA Government Programme, exclude the establishment of day-and-night care institutions for children in the Republic of Armenia;
 - (2) during 2017-2018, reorganise or close down day-and-night care institutions, develop alternative care services for children in difficult life situations to ensure the best interests of the child. Moreover, the placement of children in another care institution during reorganisation of such institutions will be considered as an extreme and a provision measure;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, streamline child adoption procedures, increase transparency, reduce corruption risks and set a referral procedure for the

protection of children subjected to violence;

- (4) by the end of 2018, reform the foster care procedure for organising the care of disadvantaged children in a family environment;
 - (5) during 2018-2019, introduce the minimum standards for the quality of services delivered to persons subjected to trafficking and exploitation and the integrated indicators for preliminary identification of victims;
 - (6) during 2018-2019, identify criteria of integrated services provided to persons subjected to domestic violence and expand the network of these services;
 - (7) by the end of 2019, delegate rehabilitation services provided to children with disabilities to relevant service providers;
 - (8) during 2019-2021, separate palliative care in special social protection institutions and retrain specialists;
 - (9) during 2020-2021, strengthen the institution of guardianship and trusteeship, with a view to organising the care of children left without parental care in their social environment;
 - (10) by the end of 2022, mainstream the gender equality component in the socio-economic development programmes of the Republic of Armenia with a view to enhancing the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, introduce situation assessment and monitoring tools.
4. In order to ensure a sufficient level of equal opportunities and accessible conditions for people with disabilities, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2020, harmonise national legislation with the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; in particular, finalise, by the end of 2017, the draft Law On Protection of Rights and Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities; by the end of 2020, impose administrative liability for infringement of accessibility conditions established

by the RA legislation, as well as for failure to comply with the requirements for accessible conditions (urban environment, transport, information technologies, sports and cultural events, etc.);

- (2) envisage reforms in the system of medical and social expertise, in particular:
 - a. during 2017-2018, establish a new system: develop and introduce mechanisms for documentary examination in the process of medical and social expertise and criteria for disaggregating disease from disability;
 - b. during 2017-2018, apply the new model of disability definition for comprehensive evaluation of a person based on the principles of the World Health Organization International Classification of Functions;
 - c. during 2018-2020, introduce, in accordance with the new model, mechanisms for providing targeted rehabilitation services as a result of the needs assessment of an individual.
5. In order to implement an active and healthy ageing policy, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2018, with a view to improving the quality and range of services to elderly people in state-run and private nursing care institutions, establish mechanisms for the rendering of paid and co-paid services, as well as outsourcing the provision of care services on a competitive basis;
 - (2) during 2018-2019, develop and pilot test models (projects) of alternative care services for elderly people;
 - (3) by the end of 2021, based on the outcomes of elderly people needs assessment, establish Community Alternative Services for Elderly Social Protection in the Marzes of the Republic of Armenia.
6. Emphasising the role of a targeted, effective and transparent management system in the field of pensions, benefits and other payments, based on "maximum value

for money" principle, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2018, reorganise the processes of cash payment designation and separate the function of servicing citizens from the decision-making function (administration) with a view to minimising contacts between decision-makers and beneficiaries;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, streamline the range of provided on-line services with a view to continuously reducing existing risks in the areas of pensions, benefits and other payments, and to ensuring accessibility and availability of services.
7. In order to improve the demographic situation, measures should be undertaken to reduce emigration, increase birth rates and life expectancy, decrease mortality rates, increase the number of marriages, as well as create conditions for repatriation, reduce the negative balance of external migration and significantly diminish the number of disaster victims:
- (1) by the end of 2017, develop a long-term strategy for improving the demographic situation in the Republic of Armenia (up to 2040), a comprehensive programme for a 5-year period, implement measures envisaged thereby, creating sufficient prerequisites for significant increase in the number of the current population of the Republic in the long run;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, elaborate a draft Law On Multi-Child Families, incorporating the birth and social guarantees provided to large families (with 4 or more children).
8. In order to define the priorities of the policy in the field of social protection and provide services corresponding to the needs of beneficiaries, it is planned to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, develop the M&E toolkit for all programmes and services provided in the field of social protection;

- (2) by the end of 2018, introduce a unified "Electronic Social Services" information system;
- (3) during 2018-2022, perform M&E of the delivery and impact of integrated social services, programmes implemented in the field of social protection through extra-budgetary funds.

4.3. HEALTHCARE

The Armenian public healthcare system should be of high quality, effective, accessible and transparent. A healthy lifestyle should become an integral part of our life in terms of becoming a norm of everyday life, as well as monitoring and early prevention of diseases.

Due to increased public health expenditures, monitoring of provided financial means and effective quality control mechanisms, citizens of Armenia will not have to pay additional fees for state-funded services and receive low-quality services.

Free medical care should only be provided on the basis of social justice. At the same time, the State should stand by anyone in need of urgent medical assistance. Due to the high quality of state-guaranteed medical services, introduction of the e-health system, market and competitive pricing mechanisms for healthcare services, the RA Government will create bases for gradual transition to compulsory health insurance system.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to enhance healthy lifestyles and provide long-term preventive solutions in the area of public health, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) ensure effective management of prevention and control of infectious diseases, in particular:

- a. by the end of 2017, increase the system's electronic governance capacities through training and launching of new terminals, as well as introduce a centralised biosecurity management system by the end of 2018;
 - b. develop the laboratory system, in particular, by the end of 2017, introduce up-to-date labs and documentation systems;
- (2) through effective management (prevention, early detection and control) of non-communicable diseases (NCD) and NCD risk factors:
 - a. reduce the use of tobacco and other harmful substances, in particular, by the end of 2017, elaborate amendments to the RA laws in which the restrictions on tobacco use and advertising will be strictly enforced. In 2018, develop regulatory norms contributing to the fight against smoking;
 - b. ensure targeted early detection of NCD, finalise current screening programmes during 2017-2018, and during 2018-2021, introduce a plan of measures to combat chronic lung obstructive pulmonary disease;
 - c. facilitate the immune-prevention process, in particular, endorse the plan for the introduction of a vaccine against human papilloma virus by the end of 2017.
- 2. In order to eliminate disparity between the budgetary funds and the results achieved in the healthcare sector, the RA Government plans a gradual transition from the actual allocation of budgetary funds among healthcare facilities to a competitive market procurement model of healthcare services. In the area of healthcare financing and financial supervision, the RA Government plans the provision of targeted, effective and transparent mechanisms for the allocation of state budgetary funds, as well as gradual increase in the share of centralised distribution of available resources in the healthcare sector. To this end, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) in 2017, approve the full revised package based on the principles of free and privileged state-guaranteed medical care and service, social justice and provision of the realistic scope of care, and launch it starting from early 2018;
- (2) introduce the case management approach in the procurement of medical services for effective use of state-funded resources, increase the role of the mechanism of doctor-experts in the State Health Agency (SHA) and attract the capacities of insurance companies. In particular, by the end of 2017, the hospital medical care packages will be introduced pursuant to this and, based on the analysis of the outcomes, in 2018, medical aid packages will be available for the underprivileged;
- (3) revise criteria for the selection of state-funded medical institutions by the end of 2017, with the aim of raising the level of transparency of the selection process;
- (4) ensure financial control and transparency of healthcare providers, including the highest level of accountability in all medical institutions eligible for state funding. Particularly, define a mandatory requirement to submit a three-year business plan for state-run institutions starting from 2018, introduce IFRS (Financial Reporting Standards) in healthcare organisations in 2018, define the requirement for compulsory annual external audits in large-scale medical institutions eligible for state funding starting from 2018, in order to ensure the transparency of the system introduce, in 2018, the requirement for mandatory publication of the financial statements of healthcare organisations under the unified platform;
- (5) by the end of 2019, develop and implement a methodology for calculating the cost of medical care and services based on medical-economic standards and healthy market competition;

- (6) by the end of 2018, introduce a two-stage centralised procurement process of pharmaceuticals, chemicals, medical devices and supplies purchased at the expense of government procurement;
 - (7) in collaboration with the Central Bank (or subject to its consent), develop the concept paper on mandatory health insurance in Armenia.
3. In order to improve the outcomes of treatment and the quality of medical services and with a view to ensuring control and transparency, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) continuously enhance the professional skills and capacities of health professionals, including:
 - a. in line with the internationally accepted guidelines on crediting Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Continuous Medical Education (CME) in the area of management of health human potential, by the end of 2017, define the requirements for crediting within the framework of continuous professional development and education;
 - b. during 2017-2021, gradually introduce the certification process, as well introduce in Armenia, by the end of 2017, the system of testing medical care and service providers for the purpose of certification;
 - c. by the end of 2017, develop and approve the procedure for issuing short-term permits for professional activity of foreign providers on the initiative or at the invitation of the organisations operating in the Republic of Armenia;
 - d. by the end of 2017, develop a concept paper aimed at providing marz medical institutions with dedicated core (narrow) specialists;
 - e. by the end of 2018, develop the concept paper on functional reforms of medical associations operating in the Republic of Armenia;

- f. by the end of 2020, finalise the programme for modernisation of the marz hospital system;
- (2) as a result of complex measures, enhance the quality of medical services provided to the population, including:
 - a. during 2017-2021, continuously introduce clinical guidelines and patient management practices. In particular, translate, localise and implement 600 guidelines, 350 operational procedures and 600 procedures;
 - b. by the end of 2018, develop and implement a modern regulatory framework for the provision of healthcare services, medical institutions and human resources, in particular, establish a legislative framework for SHA activities, organisation of in-patient and diagnostic services and the human resource potential;
 - c. during 2018-2020, develop and introduce healthcare monitoring and quality management systems, including the quality criteria of SHA and in-patient services, standards of qualitative and quantitative assessment of services at the national level.
- (3) streamline the fight against the circulation of counterfeit drugs and products for medical purpose, including:
 - a. by the end of 2017, introduce the requirements for the Council of Europe Convention on Fraudulent Substance and Other Public Health Hazards;
 - b. during 2017-2019, approve legal acts on the requirements for medical devices, equipment and supplies;
- (4) provide a new mechanism for rapid, inexpensive and cost-effective dispute resolution in patient-health relations through the decisions of the new extrajudicial body, i.e. the office of medical ombudsman, including:

- a. by the end of 2017, approve the concept paper on the draft RA Law on Medical Ombudsman's Activity;
 - b. during 2018-2019, elaborate the RA Law on Medical Ombudsman's Activity and other legal acts thereof and submit it to the RA National Assembly.
4. In order to increase physical access of population to medical services based on the principle of universal accessibility, ensure proportional distribution of healthcare infrastructures and professional potential in the territory of the Republic of Armenia, delivery of quality services throughout the country, the RA Government plans to establish optimal quantities of the healthcare institutions, hospital beds and staff, including:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, optimise the central apparatus of the RA Ministry of Healthcare and its subordinate organisations;
 - (2) in the second half of 2017, approve the optimisation plan for institutions providing psychiatric care in Armenia and, by the end of 2018, the optimisation action plan;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, approve the optimal system (master plan) of inpatient and outpatient systems in the city of Yerevan and marzes;
 - (4) by the end of 2018, elaborate a concept paper on primary healthcare reform with a view to saving the state funds associated with late appealability to the most expensive hospitals;
 - (5) from 2017 to 2019, implement phase-by-phase works for concession management and/or privatisation of medical centres;
 - (6) continue the programme for the modernisation of the marz hospital system, including in the Vayots Dzor Marz.

5. Quality management, proper accounting, comprehensive and integrated development of human resources in the healthcare sector, ensuring targeted spending, traceability and control over the financial resources available in the healthcare system could be possible only with the full use of a unified electronic system (E-HEALTH), which will be launched in 2017, and the phase-by-phase introduction of the holistic healthcare system and its subsystems, which will gradually increase and become more active, and which is planned to be completed in the upcoming 5 years. To this end, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) by the end of 2017, form a portfolio of legal documents necessary for the introduction of the system;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, initiate registration of services provided by the licensed medical institutions, pharmacies and insurance companies in the electronic healthcare system. Full implementation of the system is expected to be completed within the next three years;
 - (3) during 2018-2022, create and introduce unified software packages for on-line registration, telemedicine, customer reviews, customer complaints registration and examination, drug storage, medical guidelines and analytical data management, laboratory research and medical radiology images.
6. With a view to enhancing new services in the healthcare system, providing for capacity development, medical services (medical tourism) and promotion of quality of services, the RA Government plans to introduce and promote narrow specialised service clusters and national programmes for qualitative development, including:
- (1) approve the concept paper on medical services of narrow professional clusters, in particular:
 - a. by the end of 2018, implement in practice the strategy of palliative care services;

- b. during 2018-2021, put in place concepts on development of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, thyroid tumours and malignant neoplasms;
 - c. during 2018-2019, develop medical tourism, which will be mainly implemented through the creation of a database of organisations providing access to narrow professional services and raising awareness about them in different markets. In particular, during 2018-2019, create a database of organisations providing high-quality plastic surgery, dental, rehabilitation and comprehensive check-up services and raising public awareness.
7. By the end of 2019, elaborate draft Law on Public Health and submit it to the National Assembly for approval.

4.4. NATURE PROTECTION

Complex protection, improvement, rehabilitation and reasonable use of environment and natural resources are not just an important precondition for the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature, but also a guarantee for the application of the constitutional norms of sustainable development of the country.

Pursuant to the principles of sustainable development, the RA Government in the next five years will undertake actions that will exclude natural resources exploitation, minimise negative impacts on the environment, including on human life and health, will ensure the prevention or mitigation of environmental pollution, complex natural resource management and control thereof.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In terms of continuous improvement and enhancement of the environmental management system, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, formulate the legislative framework for the new environmental policy;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, adopt the strategy and the action plan for the environmental management protection and the use of natural resources;
 - (3) by the end of 2017, put in place the environmental surveillance system, shifting from responding to the consequences to preventing the offences;
 - (4) during 2017-2018, introduce an integrated management system in the field of environmental protection by consolidating the functions of the RA Ministry of Nature Protection;
 - (5) during 2018, review the legislation on environmental impact assessment and expertise taking into account the internationally accepted standards.
2. Regarding the reduction of corruption risks, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, adopt the Strategy for Development of Ecological Education;
 - (2) during 2017-2018, establish a unified electronic reporting system;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, introduce a unified system for electronic issuance of environmental permits (licences);
 - (4) during 2018-2020, improve the system of environmental taxes and nature use fees, as well as the system of liability and compensation for damage in the environmental sector;
 - (5) during 2018-2022, improve the legal framework ensuring the fulfilment of commitments undertaken by the Republic of Armenia under the international treaties regulating the sector, as well as initiate ratification of the protocols of

- a number of international environmental agreements;
- (6) by the end of 2019, develop a unified state environmental monitoring and information system (creating a national portal and updating subject-specific databases and natural habitats cadastres).
3. For the protection and sustainable use of water resources, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) in 2017, adopt the standards for environmental impact assessment for the construction and operation of small hydropower plants;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, elaborate a package of amendments to the legislation regulating the process of drainage and wastewater treatment;
 - (3) during 2017-2018, install on-line water metering systems for automated control of agricultural and fish breeding water users in Ararat valley;
 - (4) by the end of 2021, implement measures on improving management efficiency and sustainable use of water resources in Ararat Valley;
 - (5) by the end of 2021, adopt the management plans for Sevan, Hrazdan and Northern Basin Regions and revise Akhuryan, South and Ararat water basin management plans.
4. In order to ensure the restoration and preservation of the ecological balance of Lake Sevan, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) during 2017-2022, ensure continuous restoration and preservation of the ecological balance of Lake Sevan, as well as develop new cleanup mechanisms for the coastal zone in accordance with the legislative regulations;
 - (2) by the end of 2019, adopt the Concept Paper and Management Plan for the Sevan National Park Development.

5. For the purpose of atmospheric air protection, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by to the end of 2018, elaborate draft legal acts on improvement of the atmospheric air protection legislation;
 - (2) during 2018, adopt Climate Change National Adaptation Programme (NAP).
6. For the purpose of protection of land and subsoil resources, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, improve the legislation on environmental monitoring and accountability by subsoil users, introducing a current monitoring system;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, adopt a concept paper for management of the reclamation fund for the purpose of targeted use of funds allocated to the environment protection fund (reclamation fund) by subsoil users and for the restoration of degraded lands;
 - (3) during 2018-2020, introduce mechanisms ensuring the implementation of the concept paper provisions.
7. For the purpose of biodiversity conservation, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, complete the design of the National Centre for Biodiversity Conservation and Environmental Education on the basis of Yerevan Botanical Garden;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, adopt a concept paper and action plan for introducing a system for the prevention of illegal deforestation through the use of modern technologies;
 - (3) during 2018-2022, adopt management plans for all specially protected areas;
 - (4) carry out activities for assessing and passporting biodiversity business potential in the territory of the Republic of Armenia (by the end of 2018) for the purpose of effective use of the existing biodiversity and ecotourism

potential and for creating an electronic information system by 2020;

(5) by the end of 2022, establish "Jermuk" National Park within the framework of public-private partnership.

8. With regards to chemicals and waste management, the RA Government plans to:

(1) by the end of 2017, elaborate draft legal acts in the field of mining waste and mining waste facilities management;

(2) during 2017-2022, introduce a new economic mechanism aimed at reducing the burial of consumption wastes and their inclusion in the economy (expanded producer responsibility);

(3) during 2018-2019, create a legislative framework regulating the use of chemicals that will regulate issues related to the safe use of chemicals, state registration of produced and imported chemicals, passporting and warning marking;

(4) during 2019-2022, destroy overdue waste in Nubarashen landfill for pesticides and neutralise persistent organic pollutants in line with international commitments.

9. Regarding the introduction of innovative economic and financial mechanisms for the protection of the environment, the RA Government plans to:

(1) by the end of 2017, develop the concept paper for introducing green economy principles;

(2) by the end of 2018, study and negotiate with international institutions the introduction of the financing mechanism of debt-for-nature swaps;

(3) during 2018-2022, undertake necessary efforts to make use of all the channels and mechanisms of technical and financial assistance provided for by international treaties and conventions ratified by the Republic of Armenia,

including the signing of the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the Green Climate Fund between the RA Government and the Green Climate Fund in 2017;

- (4) during 2019-2022, establish and apply public-private partnership-based financing mechanisms, such as environmental — including community — funds, insurance and civil revolving investment funds.

4.5. CULTURE

The cultural policy of the Republic of Armenia will be directed to the formation of the cultural environment based on spiritual and national traditions, the creation of competitive cultural products and services, the preservation of historical and cultural heritage and full participation of the public in contemporary cultural developments, the promotion of the creative capacities of the individual, formation of a society with national identity and high level of civic consciousness.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to improve the legislative field in the sphere of culture, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, submit the draft Law on Making Amendment to the Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Protection and Use of Historical and Cultural Immovable Monuments and Historical Environment;
 - (2) by the end of 2017, elaborate a draft Law on Cinematography;
 - (3) by the end of 2020, adopt the legal acts resulting from the 2016-2020 Strategy and Action Plan for Conservation, Use and Promotion of Historical and Cultural Monuments, including:

- a. by the end of 2018, elaborate a draft legal act “On the procedure for certification of specialists in the field of preservation and use of historical and cultural monuments, the list of types of professional activities in the field of preservation and use of historical and cultural monuments and the form of certificates for specialists in the field of preservation and use of historical and cultural monuments”;
 - b. by the end of 2018, elaborate a draft legal act “On approving criteria on including a new site in the state inventory of monuments and deletion of monuments from the state list”;
 - c. by the end of 2020, establish 6 historical and cultural reserve museums in order to improve the safeguarding of historical, archaeological, architectural monuments, monuments complexes, monuments, historical and natural environment and their promotional measures.
2. In order to promote economic growth in the processes of sale of cultural products and provision of services, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2018, introduce a single electronic ticket system;
 - (2) during 2017-2022, expand the bookseller chain, to provide favourable conditions for the establishment of bookstores and bookseller points, including by the end of 2017, support the creation of a new bookstore on the premises of the State Russian Drama Theatre after Stanislavsky, launch mobile "book-buses" bookstores in the marzes;
 - (3) by the end of 2020, develop new souvenir products in line with the profile of each museum and effective mechanisms for their sale;
 - (4) during 2017-2020, draft investment policies aimed at the modernisation and development of infrastructures in the buffer zones of historical and cultural monuments and their surrounding territories, as well as the implementation of

new management models.

3. In order to ensure access to information in the field of cultural heritage, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2020, prepare and install unified (trilingual) information panels (QR codes) in at least 300 monument complexes;
 - (2) by the end of 2021, ensure access to cultural heritage through digitalisation, including an inviolable collection of works from 1512 to the 1960s available in the National Library of Armenia, cinematography heritage, and musical scores.
4. In order to introduce the modern model of management for development of the film industry in Armenia, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, establish the institution of “Film Commissioner”;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, develop the legal basis for the introduction of a contemporary model of film industry management;
 - (3) by the end of 2018, develop a programme for the establishment of a regional cinema school within the framework of public-private partnership.
5. In order to promote the creative talents of children and teenagers in the field of art education and aesthetic nurturing, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2019, expand the scope, directions and frames of targeted and creative projects;
 - (2) implement cognitive projects for children and adolescents:
 - a. during 2018-2022, textbooks, methodical manuals and copy-books in Armenian devoted to music, art and fine arts will be developed and published for children;

- b. theoretical knowledge in the system of general and extra-curricular education will be combined with practical and subject-oriented cultural knowledge through contemporary methods. By the end of 2017, the "Cultural Organisation-School" subscription programme will be established.
- 6. In order to ensure the proportionality, accessibility and availability of cultural services in the marzes, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) starting from 2018, launch the programme for support to newly created cultural unions and individual creative projects in the marzes;
 - (2) during 2018-2022, continue the implementation of the Cultural Stop Shop project through which 400 different events (theatre and drama performances, film screenings, and exhibitions) will be held annually. It is planned to expand the programme with the introduction of mobile cinemas starting from 2018, which will result in the screenings of up to 200 films annually in different communities of Armenia and Artsakh;
 - (3) in 2018, initiate the creation of the community movie theatres' republican network in the RA Marzes.
- 7. In order to promote Armenian culture in foreign countries and present the culture of foreign countries in Armenia, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) present Armenian culture in foreign countries:
 - a. organise exhibitions dedicated to the history and achievements of the Armenian civilisation in reputable museums and leading exhibition halls in the world (including America, Europe and Asia);
 - b. participate in prestigious international festivals, exhibitions and fairs, in particular in the spheres of art, architecture, cinema and literature;

- c. based on the principle of reciprocity, introduce Armenian culture within the "Culture Days" or other formats in foreign countries, in at least five countries each year.
 - (2) present the cultures of foreign countries in Armenia:
 - a. introduce the culture of foreign countries in Armenia within the "Culture Days" or other formats, at least five countries each year;
 - b. host large-scale international events in Armenia, including international festivals of contemporary art, cinema, theatre and music, and concerts of eminent performers.
 - (3) co-operate within the framework of UNESCO, in particular, prepare nomination files for the inscription on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the World Heritage List, the Calendar of historic events and anniversaries of eminent personalities and for obtaining enhanced protection, and in particular, assist in publishing Armenian literature and translations in foreign countries.
8. With a view to expanding the cultural component in television, radio, press and social media, the RA Government plans to:
- (1) starting from 2018, initiate the creation of popular scientific and cognitive educational TV programmes that present historical and cultural heritage;
 - (2) in order to enhance promotion and spread of Armenian language during 2017-2022, consistently work on increasing the representation of the Armenian language on the Internet.
 - (3) during 2018-2022, popularise cultural life, activities of contemporary artists through television, radio, press and social media, cover cultural developments;
 - (4) by the end of 2021, ensure the involvement of modern IT in the design and implementation of cultural projects.

9. By the end of 2021, the RA Government plans to complete the inventory of, as well as the acts of locating and registering the Armenian cultural creativity potential, create a unified information database (portal).

4.6. SPORT AND YOUTH

Young people with confidence in the future will create a strong and healthy family, safe and forward-looking country. The RA Government plans to create an environment in which young people with the greatest potential of the society can fully develop, be happy and always be in line with their conscience. That is why educational events should ensure nurturing Armenian traditions to our younger generation and generating the ability to be "a global citizen" at the same time. Youth employment arrangements and special support programmes for socially insecure young families should be implemented consistently.

The main objective of the state youth policy is to raise the level of youth participation in political, economic and cultural life, to promote the development of inter-marz and inter-community horizontal co-operation between the young people and youth organisations.

The RA Government will consistently implement activities aimed at popularising sports. In order to ensure wide involvement of the population in physical culture and sports, it is planned to apply a new financing model, based on the principle of state-community-private sector co-operation as much as possible.

The activities of the RA Government for the upcoming 5 years will be mainly aimed at the following:

1. In order to ensure continuity of physical education of the population and the creation of favourable conditions for the healthy lifestyle of all age groups of the population, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) rolling out physical culture and mass sports among the population of the Republic of Armenia, in particular:
 - a. during 2017-2022, implement physical culture and health-related events at the country and marz level with a view to creating favourable conditions for a healthy lifestyle;
 - b. by the end of 2017, promote the enhancement of the effectiveness of the teaching of "Physical Culture" in secondary schools. Increase teenagers' physical fitness during 2018-2022;
 - c. by the end of 2017, develop mechanisms for transferring the management of sport halls in general schools to the private sector. During 2018-2022, as needed, transfer sport halls in general schools to private sector in order to repair and replenish their property, through the signing of contracts on the use of the sport halls by destination (target) and for making the sport halls available for physical education classes in the general school;
 - d. develop a national programme on rolling out physical culture and sports by the end of 2017, pilot-test and introduce the programme during 2018-2019;
 - e. develop a concept paper on rolling out physical culture and sports in the yards by the end of 2017, and the events of 2018-2022 derived from the concept to be implemented by the end of 2018;
- (2) develop a Concept Paper on the Creation and Improvement of Sport Tourism Development in the Republic of Armenia by the end of 2017, and the ensuing action plan by the end of 2018;
- (3) by 2018, develop a mechanism on ensuring the equal rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities to engage in physical culture and sports across the

whole territory of the Republic of Armenia, develop a variety of sporting opportunities for disabled persons, a toolkit for creating and maintaining an effective system of mass sports activities.

2. For the purpose of development of children's and youth sports, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) during 2017-2018, define job requirements for trainers and pedagogues and management personnel working in the Republic of Armenia's junior sports schools and develop an effective mechanism for organisation of their training;
- (2) during 2017-2022, repair, rehabilitate and construct new sports facilities, sports halls for children's sports schools, in stages;
- (3) during 2018-2022, consistently implement "Providing Property to Armenian Youth Sports Schools, National Federation of Sports and Other Sports Organisations" programme, and develop at least 6 joint educational programmes per year for junior sports schools operating in the Republic of Armenia, according to kinds sports and training stages;
- (4) for the purpose of maintaining continuity, starting from 2018-2019, establish a school of higher sport skills for continuous training of prospective athletes above the age of 18 at junior sports schools.

3. Within the framework of implementing "Provision of Property for Sports Halls of General, Secondary and Vocational Education Institutions" programme, the RA Government plans to:

- (1) by the end of 2017, define criteria for allocating property and resources;
- (2) by the end of 2018, adopt a clear set of instruments to identify the facilities to be replenished with appropriate property and to provide the property by 2018-2022.

4. With a view to developing shooting sport, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop a shooting sport strategy according to the Sport Development Concept Paper and 2018-2024 Action Plan and accordingly allocate the necessary premises and facilities;
 - (2) during 2018-2021, perform phase-by-phase renovation of shooting range facilities (including those belonging to the Pan-Armenian Patriotic Non-Governmental Organisation “Armenian DOSAAF”).
5. With a view to developing inter-marz and inter-community horizontal co-operation between the young people and youth organisations, the RA Government plans during 2018-2022, to enhance the "Youth Capital" programme and implement joint events of regional youth organisations of the marz cities, inter alia, enhance the capacities of the councils adjunct to marz governors by the end of 2018 and establish a horizontal platform for co-operation.
6. In order to increase the participation of young people in political, economic and cultural life, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) by the end of 2017, develop and introduce a youth professional orientation, professional skills development and effective employment module within the framework of the Youth Workers' Training Institute;
 - (2) by the end of 2018, develop model and tools for raising the level of legal awareness of young people, capacity building of youth non-governmental organisations, as well as development of project-writing skills.
7. With a view to providing objective and realistic solutions to the problems of youth employment and the socio-economic problems of young people, the RA Government plans to:
 - (1) during 2017-2018, explore the state and international programmes for promoting creative employment among young people, and develop

recommendations for effective implementation;

- (2) during 2018-2020, explore the creative entrepreneurship development models of young people and introduce experimental input within a specific focus group;
- (3) revise the State Support Programmes for young families and young people to obtain housing from 2018 to 2022 and expand provided benefits.

Chief of Staff
of the Government
of the Republic of Armenia

V. Stepanyan