

**Yerevan, 12 May 2010** – Today, the first meeting of the State Interagency Committee to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Armenia was held in the premises of the RoA Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA).

The Committee was established as per Decree (N 213-A, March 30, 2010) of the RoA Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan. The creation of the State Interagency Committee to Combat Gender-Based Violence (GBV) became an unprecedented act of political will at the highest policy-making levels that demonstrated the readiness of the RoA Government to take concrete steps towards eradication of GBV in the Republic of Armenia.

The decision concerning the establishment of the State Interagency Committee to Combat GBV was a follow up to the official request from UNFPA Armenia addressed to the RoA Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, which stated the importance of coordination of the efforts undertaken by different structures in the field, and ongoing support to the RoA Government for implementation of the national policies and programmes targeting GBV reduction and prevention, as well as called upon the Government of Armenia to create a special coordination and monitoring body on the highest official level to ensure the effectiveness of the programmes implemented in the field.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Filaret Berikyan, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs. The following speakers also were included in the agenda:

- Ms. Lala Ghazaryan, Head of the Family, Women and Children Department of the RoA MLSA;
- Ms. Armenuhi Tanashyan, Head of Division of Women Issues of the Family, Women and Children Department of the RoA MLSA;
- Ms. Jina Sargizova, UNFPA “Combating Gender-Based Violence in the South Caucasus” Project Coordinator.

The State Interagency Committee includes representatives from:

- Cabinet of the RoA Government,
- RoA Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs,
- RoA Ministry of Territorial Administration,
- RoA Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- RoA Ministry of Healthcare,
- RoA Ministry of Justice,
- RoA Ministry of Economy,
- RoA Ministry of Education and Science,
- RoA Police,
- International organizations in the field including UN agencies (UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, and UNHCR), IOM, OSCE, USAID, as well as
- Local NGOs in the field including Armenian Association of Women with University Education (AAWUE), International Center for Human Development (ICHHD), Women’s Resource Center, and Women’s Rights Center (WRC).

During the meeting the members of the Committee agreed to create two Working Groups:

- a) Working Group on Organisational Issues, which will develop the Charter of the State Interagency Committee to Combat GBV; and
- b) Working Group, which will be working on elaboration and promotion of 2011-2014 National Action Plan to Combat GBV in Armenia.