

**INTERVIEW WITH MR. KAREN ANDREASYAN,
MINISTER OF JUSTICE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**

A Georgian-Armenian legal forum has recently been held in Tbilisi. What was the purpose of the event and how would you assess its outcomes?

As you know legal forums between the Ministries of Justice of our two countries are being held since 2015. The purpose of these forums are and have always been to share both our countries best experience in order to implement beneficial reforms in the field of justice, as well as to strengthen the ties and amicable relations between the two ministries. I believe that the recent Armenian-Georgian Legal Forum held earlier this year in Tbilisi, just like the previous ones has had a very fruitful and beneficial outcome, thanks to which we will be able to improve our justice system.

How important do you consider the cooperation between the Ministries of Justice of our countries?

The cooperation between the two ministries has a long history, which is of great value to us. One of the brightest examples of said cooperation are the Legal Forums, which have become a greatly efficient „tradition“ between our two countries. That being said, we are very eager to take this cooperation between our countries to new levels, for it will contribute to the exchange of best practices in the areas related to the competencies of the Ministries of Justice of the Republic of Armenia. It will also contribute to the strengthening of the existing partnership, effective, friendly relations between the Ministries of Justice in the fields related to our mutual interests, as well as the expansion and deepening of cooperation through mutual visits of the two Ministries.

I am certain that the close dialogue between our ministries will contribute to our common goal of achieving good partnership between our two countries. Therefore, I believe that the continuity of the Armenian-Georgian legal forum will be a good platform to discuss all issues that are of mutual interest.

For post-Soviet countries, the task remains to free their national legal systems from the negative legacy and remnants. What is being done in order to approximate the legal system of Armenia to European standards?

In order to come up with the best ideas for reforms in the justice system and in order to implement said reforms, we are looking into the best experience of a number of partner countries to be used as guidance for improvements to be made in our country, one of these countries being our neighbor Georgia, with its exemplary experience. As for approximation of Armenian national law to European standards, I find it noteworthy that Armenia has ratified a Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA). A roadmap has been established in accordance with said agreement which our country is respecting and following.



What is commendable and acceptable for you in the Georgian model of the justice system, and do you consider sharing our experience in any direction?

Currently, we have a wide program for reforms to be made in our country. Namely we are intensively working on constitutional and judicial amendments, as well as improvements in the fields of penitentiary, probation, compulsory execution, anti-corruption policy, human rights, police reforms etc. Georgia provides us with new ideas related to the aforementioned fields.

One such example is the e-system known as „Probbox“, which enables the Probation Service to operate efficiently without having to open new branches, as well as save human resources and manage them properly. Taking into account the digitalization processes in the field of justice, the introduction of this innovative device will be a significant achievement in the Republic of Armenia, which will enable more effective management of human and material resources in the future, thus significantly reducing costs in the field of probation. I also find important the possibility of deploying in Armenia the „Mobile Houses of Justice“, this is a new approach in this area and is aimed at developing the effectiveness of the already existing houses of justice, as well as the idea of creating arbitration centers, which is currently in the initial stage of establishment in Armenia and has already been implemented in Georgia

How do you see the Armenian justice system after the reforms you have planned?

In 2019 the Government of Armenia has designed a very ambitious reform agenda which is reflected within the sectoral strategic documents. These documents have been elaborated and will be implemented with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including the representatives of civil society and with the engagement of our international partners.

Once the reforms in question have been completed, we expect our justice system to be much more fair, efficient, practical and more leaning towards human rights. Our reform agenda as a whole will allow us to ensure integrity among main justice chain actors, especially judges, thereby increasing public trust in the judiciary. Which is why the cooperation between our countries is a great opportunity for growth and improvement.

At the moment, constitutional, judicial and anti-corruption reforms are being developed, as well as reforms in the areas of criminal enforcement, probation, police, enforcement, human rights, etc.