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The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

July 19, 2021

**RE: How the CROOK Act Would Support Anticorruption Work in Armenia**

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell,

As the leading civil society organization fighting to prevent and reduce corruption in Armenia, we are writing to express our support for the Countering Russian and Other Overseas Kleptocracy Act (the "CROOK Act").

Transparency International Anticorruption Center ("TIAC") works to promote good governance in Armenia through reducing corruption and strengthening democracy. In order to achieve tangible results in the fight against corruption, TIAC works to support effective anticorruption policy and transparent and accountable governance; to support the holding of free, fair, and transparent elections; to promote reasonable, transparent, and accountable public resource management; and to foster democratic processes, including the protection of human rights and public participation in the governance processes of the country.

Since the 2018 revolution against the corrupt Sargsyan regime, Armenia has experienced a shift toward democracy and the rule of law, supported by partnerships among civil society and by the new government itself. Significant, positive change has been achieved through the creation of new anticorruption infrastructure, including the establishment of institutions like the Corruption Prevention Commission, which maintains the registry of public officials' property, income, and interest declarations, among other purposes.

The United States has been the pioneer of the donor community for anticorruption efforts in Armenia. TIAC receives funding from the U.S. government, and this assistance has contributed to the effectiveness of our watchdogging activities. In particular, the work of USAID has been critical, as it has been able to issue demands with the expectation of actual results.

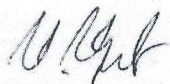


This past year, progress on anticorruption was disrupted by the Nagorno-Karabakh war along the Armenian and Azerbaijani border, which led to a political crisis and new parliamentary elections in June 2021. Armenian voters mostly rejected the representatives of former corrupt regime, which maintains the hope that the government will continue to work towards tackling corruption in the country. At the same time, there are concerns and some evidence that we will witness new manifestations of corruption with some new actors.

The "Anti-Corruption Action Funds" that would be made available through the CROOK Act would make a significant difference in our ability to support anticorruption infrastructure in Armenia. For example, after the 2018 revolution, our chapter focused on proactively building up new capacity, including new anticorruption schools to engage the country's youth and raise awareness of tools to fight corruption. Going forward, additional capacity would help us raise awareness of Armenia's struggles and successes against corruption on an international stage, as too many international organizations have closed their eyes to transnational corruption and its impact on the world, including on Armenia.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views. For any questions or additional information, please contact Sona Ayvazyan, Executive Director for TIAC by email [sona@transparency.am](mailto:sona@transparency.am) or phone +37491433278.

Sincerely,



Sona Ayvazyan  
Executive Director

Transparency International Armenia

