# Armenia as a Regional Centre for Astronomy for Development activities

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**Abstract.** The Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO, Armenia, http://www.bao.am) are among the candidate IAU Regional Nodes for Astronomy for Development activities. It is one of the main astronomical centers of the former Soviet Union and the Middle East region. At present there are 48 qualified researchers at BAO, including six Doctors of Science and 30 PhDs. Five important observational instruments are installed at BAO, the larger ones being 2.6m Cassegrain (ZTA-2.6) and 1m Schmidt (the one that provided the famous Markarian survey). BAO is regarded as a national scientific-educational center, where a number of activities are being organized, such as: international conferences (4 IAU symposia and 1 IAU colloquium, JENAM-2007, etc.), small workshops and discussions, international summer schools (1987, 2006, 2008 and 2010), and Olympiads. BAO collaborates with scientists from many countries. The Armenian Astronomical Society (ArAS, http://www.aras.am/) is an NGO founded in 2001; it has 93 members and it is rather active in the organization of educational, amateur, popular, promotional and other matters. The Armenian Virtual Observatory (ArVO, http://www.aras.am/Arvo/arvo.htm) is one of the 17 national VO projects forming the International Virtual Observatories Alliance (IVOA) and is the only VO project in the region serving also for educational purposes. A number of activities are planned, such as management, coordination and evaluation of the IAU programs in the area of development and education, establishment of the new IAU endowed lectureship program and organization of seminars and public lectures, coordination and initiation of fundraising activities for astronomy development, organization of regional scientific symposia, conferences and workshops, support to Galileo Teacher Training Program (GTTP), production/publication of educational and promotional materials, etc.