



**STATEMENT**

ENGLISH only

**In Response to the Address by the former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of  
Ireland Mr. Bertie Ahern**

**as delivered by Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Permanent Representative of  
Armenia at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security and Cooperation  
and the Permanent Council**

**February 20, 2019**

Mr. Chair,

The Delegation of Armenia warmly welcomes former Taoiseach of Ireland Bertie Ahern to the joint FSC-PC meeting and thanks him for very insightful address.

Drawing on past experiences of conflict resolution is an important part of OSCE conflict cycle, as OSCE decision 3/11 on conflict cycle encourages the OSCE Chairmanship to hold such thematic meetings. In this regard, it should be recalled that back in April 2012 the Irish Chairmanship held thematic event entitled ‘Shared Future: Building and Sustaining Peace, the Northern Ireland case study’ in Dublin strictly in line with the conflict cycle decision.

After seven years, we are pleased to revisit once again this case of successful conflict resolution in the OSCE area. However, in our view the Joint-FSC PC meeting is not a right place to implement our commitment on conflict cycle. Conflict cycle is cross – dimensional. It cannot be reduced to one dimension even if it is called the first, and the address of Mr. Bertie Ahern, which covers wide range of issues particularly human rights and fundamental freedoms, including social and economic rights, is a good case in point.

Also, in our view participating states who are supposed to be beneficiaries of offered good practices of conflict resolution should be at least consulted before setting up meetings.

Mr. Chair,

There is no golden standard of conflict resolution. We agreed in Vilnius that each crisis or conflict situation has its specific characteristics and therefore needs an approach tailored to the particular situation. Both issues and context can vary from one case to another. However, there are key elements of success and the case of Northern Ireland is definitely worth identifying and assessing in this respect.

Let me offer our perspective here without directly projecting it to any particular conflict situation, as this is not a right format for discussing efforts of particular conflict resolution.

First, conflict resolution is possible once no side pursues zero-sum game. Peace is always compromise and use of force or threat to use the force moves us further from peace and compromise.

Second, conflict resolution requires consent of all peoples involved. Peace and compromise should get ripened and strong ownership and inclusive involvement of peoples and their representatives in the peace process is essential in arriving to this point.

Third, rights of people, their security and status, should be at the center of conflict resolution. It is people and their majority who should decide their future and status of their territory through free expression of will and not the other way around. The Good Friday Agreement is very clear in this regard and it provides an accurate interpretation of the right of self-determination. The selective reference to the principles of Helsinki Final Act and omission of the equal rights and self-determination of peoples will not be helpful here.

Fourth, the agreement should be comprehensive to the extent that it addresses all critical and outstanding issues and concerns of the parties.

Fifth, the parties to the conflicts, irrespective of existing divisions of the past, may create common future based on modern democratic values including similar perception and record of and on human rights.

Last but not least, it should be conducive international environment for peace.

After this listing one may inquire to what extent it is realistic to achieve these conditions. The case of Northern Ireland shows that it is at least possible to try once there is patience and will to seek solutions than blame game.

Thank you.