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PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT

**by the Delegation of Armenia
at the 91st Joint Meeting of FSC-PC
Security Dialogue on “Women, Peace and Security: Women’s contribution to peace
and security: lessons learned and challenges ahead”**

10 July 2024

At the outset I would like to thank the OSCE Chairpersonship of Malta and the FSC Chairpersonship of Croatia for convening this joint FSC-PC meeting on Women, Peace and Security. Let me also welcome the panelists and thank them for their contributions and insightful presentations.

Gender equality and women’s empowerment are multifaceted and cross-cutting issues encompassing all pillars of the OSCE from peace and security to human rights, sustainable development and economic well-being. And in this regard it is critical to adopt a holistic and cross-dimensional approach.

To this end, efforts to maintain peace and security are more sustainable when women are equal partners in the areas of peace and security, in particular, in preventing violent conflicts, delivering relief and recovery, and contributing to lasting settlements. Women negotiators are more likely to achieve a more sustainable peace agreement, as the recent data by the UN agencies demonstrate. Meanwhile, we have to admit that despite the obligations taken by states with the adoption of the UNSC resolution 1325, women still have limited participation in conflict prevention, peace negotiations and the decision making processes. In this context it is incumbent upon all of us to exert targeted efforts to further promote gender equality and gender-mainstreaming in all aspects of public life in order to enhance security, democracy and prosperity throughout the whole region of the OSCE.

The Government of Armenia remains committed to further advancing the Women, peace and security agenda and has translated it into national action plans. The second National Action Plan on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for the period of 2022-2024, developed in cooperation with international organizations and with the involvement of

government agencies and civil society organisations, is effectively being implemented. It is noteworthy that citizens living in the bordering areas of Armenia also are engaged in the process of implementation of this National Action Plan as they bear the brunt of conflicts, military escalations and occupation.

Armenia promotes full, equal, and meaningful participation of women including in the defence sector as a key prerequisite for sustainable and lasting peace, and certain measures have been taken to increase the number of women in the military. This was among the goals of the Modernization Programme of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia introduced for the years 2018-2024. To this end, last year the National Assembly of Armenia passed a law on women's voluntary service in the military which provides women aged 18-27 the opportunity to voluntarily sign up for 6 months of service.

In this regard, it should be noted that there are still major impediments affecting women's willingness to join Armed Forces, among them ongoing armed conflicts, cases of egregious violations of international humanitarian law and failure by the international community to prevent and condemn such violations.

Despite the significant progress in advancing participation of women in peace processes and engagement in the security sector, they continue to be immensely affected by conflicts and crisis situations.

During the wars of aggression against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020, 2022 and 2023 dozens of women became victims of targeted attacks. Residential buildings, schools, even a maternity hospital were deliberately targeted, causing loss of many innocent lives. There is myriad of documented cases of heinous crimes against Armenian women, both civilians and servicepersons, including torture, degrading treatment, mutilation of bodies, decapitations and gender based violence.

During the 10 month long illegal blockade unapologetically imposed on the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, 60 000 Armenian women and girls have been subjected to intimidation and deprivation of basic human rights, including access to life saving products, such as food and medicine, which particularly impacted the pregnant and minors, causing inadequate healthcare provision, miscarriages and malnutrition. Furthermore, following these inhuman sufferings, they have been subjected to another war of aggression and ethnic cleansing, and were forced to leave their homes in a matter of days to escape further violence and brutalities. This created new challenges for Armenian women and girls, thousands of whom are victims of multiple displacements.

All these disturbing violations of IHL and IHRL make it imperative that while promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda the international community is consistent in its collective responsibility to end impunity for the flagrant violations of fundamental human rights and war crimes against female civilians and servicemembers. The international community, including this organisation, must ensure that those responsible are held accountable and brought to justice and the survivors are provided with adequate support and assistance, without prioritization of any conflict situations.

Thank you.