

STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Working session 2: Fundamental freedoms, including address by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media: – Freedom of expression, free media and information

*Delivered by Ms. Hasmik SIMONYAN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Armenia*

Mr. Moderator,

We would like to thank the OSCE Representative on the Freedom of the Media Mr. Desir for his overview of the current state of media in the OSCE region and profound insight into the challenges which journalists and media workers face while carrying out their professional functions.

Freedom of expression constitutes an important pillar of promotion of human rights and strengthening of democracy in Armenia. Today the press enjoys an unprecedented high level of freedom in the country, as the independence of the media is one of the priorities of the new Armenian Government. The commitment of the Government to refrain from controlling the media outlets is essential in creating conducive framework for media independence and pluralism.

The progress made after the Velvet Revolution in Armenia in protecting the freedom of expression and the press has been highly appreciated by our international partners, including Mr. Desir, who stated that “freedom of expression is very developed in Armenia and should remain protected”. According to the 2019 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders Armenia has improved its press freedom score by 19 points and moved up to the 61st place out of 180 countries in the world. Armenia has also been positioned as a Free Country in the annual Freedom on the Net 2018 [report](#) by Freedom House independent human rights watchdog after citizens had successfully used social media platforms, communication apps, and live-streaming services to engender political change in the country in April last year.

At the same time it should be noted that the use of fake social media accounts and attempts to manipulate the media, spread various misinformation have dramatically increased both locally and globally. The problem of “fake news” is under close attention of the Armenian Government, which is facing the challenge of fighting against that dangerous phenomenon without adverse effect for the freedom

of expression. We consider implementation of specific targeted programs to raise media literacy, particularly amongst youth, as an essential tool in effective fight against misinformation.

In this context we would like to stress the importance of providing the local media with various mechanisms of assistance from international organizations and expanding the scope of programs in this sphere in order to ensure free flow of information for all, transparency and accountability of the Government. We reiterate our readiness to continue the close cooperation with the Representative on the Freedom of the Media to further promote the freedom of expression and media in the country.

Thank you.

