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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT

**on the Code of Conduct, with a particular emphasis on the integration of women
in armed forces**

**as delivered by the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the 989th Meeting of
the Forum for Security Co-operation**

20 October 2021

Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset, I would like to thank today's keynote speakers for their interesting presentations.

Equal rights for women and men in the Republic of Armenia are guaranteed by the Constitution and the Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men adopted in 2013 which establishes equal rights for women and men in all spheres of public life, including the defense sector.

Pursuing the objective of ensuring equality between men and women in all aspects, in 2019 the Government of Armenia approved the First National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for the years 2019-2021. Promoting participation of women in armed forces, including in peacekeeping missions, and in the decision-making processes within the defense system, are among the objectives pursued by the National Action Plan. It is noteworthy that preceding the NAP development, Armenia had already taken significant actions in this direction, both through state institutions and non-governmental organizations.

Since 2013 female cadets have been studying in the military universities of the Ministry of Defense in all fields of specialization. In 2018 a seven-year Modernization Program of the Armenian Armed Forces was adopted defining promotion of the involvement of women in Armed Forces as one of the goals to be achieved.

Establishment of a female peacekeeping platoon in the Peacekeeping Brigade of the Ministry of Defense in 2017 is another important achievement of Armenia's efforts to

promote Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Since 2018, our female peacekeepers have been serving in Afghanistan, Kosovo/KFOR and Lebanon.

Measures have also been taken for the protection of women's rights in the Armed Forces. In 2019, the Department for Work with Women was established within the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Armenia, which is the first specialized subdivision dealing with female service members' issues.

Mr. Chairperson,

On 19 May, the Armenian FSC Chairmanship organized a Security Dialogue on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 with a focus on full, equal and meaningful participation of women in security and armed forces during which Armenia's efforts and achievements in promoting Women, Peace and Security agenda both at the national and international levels, as well as challenges that affect women's involvement in Armed Forces were presented, one of them being the violence against women and girls. It should be noted that for the countries with ongoing armed conflicts cases of violations of international humanitarian law and failure by the international community to prevent and condemn such violations is a major factor affecting women's willingness to join Armed Forces. While promoting the WPS agenda it is important that the international community does not forget about its collective responsibility to put an end to impunity for crimes against humanity and war crimes.

In conclusion, the delegation of Armenia considers the Code of Conduct as one of the most important normative documents adopted by the OSCE participating States which holds a specific place within the politico-military dimension of the OSCE. Its importance is accentuated by the fact that it establishes norms and principles regulating not only intra-state but also inter-state relations, such as rights and duties of armed forces personnel, the topic of today's Security Dialogue. With the adoption of the Code, participating States have introduced a valuable instrument which can largely contribute to security in the OSCE area if implemented in good faith. Therefore, we should be cautious in not undermining its mission and value, especially currently, in times of missing trust and confidence among participating States.

Thank you.