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**DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**  
**ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

**Statement**

**On the Constitutional Referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh Republic  
delivered by the Delegation of Armenia at the 1135th Meeting of the OSCE  
Permanent Council**

March 02, 2017

Mr. Chairman,

We regret that the Delegation of the European Union didn't find expedient to inform the Delegation of Armenia that it is raising a current issue. But you can rest assured that it will not affect the quality of our response.

The Delegation of Armenia has already presented its position on the constitutional referendum, which was held in Nagorno-Karabakh on February 20, 2017.

We have circulated the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on the outcomes of the referendum and at this stage would like to highlight some key aspects.

More than 76 percent of registered voters participated in the referendum, out of which 87,6% supported adoption of the new Constitution.

Around 100 international observers from 30 countries monitored the voting process and positively assessed organization and conduct of the referendum, noting their transparency and compliance with international standards.

In the comment made in relation to the referendum the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Edward Nalbandian stressed that "The referendum held on February 20 is yet another evidence of the determination of the people of Artsakh to organise their public life by democratic processes. The current Constitutional Referendum is aimed at choosing the system of governance that the people of Nagorno-Karabakh consider more relevant to their needs".

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to underline again that the right to vote and form constitutional framework of government is an inalienable human right and no any people should be deprived of this right in the OSCE area. For quarter of a century Nagorno-Karabakh conducts processes inherent to democratic societies and there is no doubt that the people of Artsakh have

certainly earned the right to live according to the same universal values that the free democratic world enjoys.

Once again the people of Artsakh demonstrated that their will to build democratic society is irreversible, notwithstanding all odds of continuous use of force and threat of force, economic blockade and other hostile actions perpetrated by Azerbaijan. It does not come as a surprise that the ongoing democratic processes in Artsakh are met with such an extreme discontent in Azerbaijan, which is moving in the opposite direction of strengthening hereditary regime.

We took note of the statement of the EU delegation. Even though some exceptional entities such as EU can be governed by treaties not laws but even this exception had been enforced by a referendum. Therefore, it goes without saying that the people should be governed by laws and popular vote under all circumstances.

Any voices, which casts doubt on the right of people living in the conflict area to use democratic processes of governance, encourages the maximalist stance of the party to the conflict which openly advocates and promotes the infringement upon human rights of people living in the conflict areas through all available means including use of force.

We hope that this simple reality will be eventually captured particularly by those who put forward their interests along their values in the international affairs.

Thank You.