



ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՊԱՏՎԻՐԱԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

Statement

**In Response to Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the
Red Cross
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 982th Meeting of the OSCE
Permanent Council**

January 30, 2014

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to warmly welcome Mr. Peter Maurer, President of International Committee of the Red Cross and express our gratitude for the encouraging and thought provoking address.

First of all, we would like to extend our sincere congratulations on the 150th Anniversary of the International Committee of the Red Cross. This significant and turbulent period of the history of humanity was marked not only with the great tragedies of the two World Wars, genocides and widespread violence but also with the great hope, which Jean-Henri Dunant and his followers gave to the humankind by establishing the Red Cross Movement.

The ICRC with its principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence, solely humanitarian mandate and decades of hard work has proven to be a value, and it is our common responsibility to protect and support it.

The Government of Armenia stresses utmost importance to cooperation with the ICRC, which goes back to 1992. We would like to commend the efforts of the ICRC in addressing the humanitarian consequences of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, including the problem of missing persons and organization of the return of prisoners of war.

We fully share your assessment that the resolution of the remaining cases of missing persons is vital for reconciliation and stability in the region. Among the recent steps of the Government of Armenia in this vein is drafting of the Law “On Missing Persons”, which is currently passing intrastate procedures. The Armenian side has welcomed the recent initiative of the ICRC to create a database of the DNA of

families of missing persons, aimed to facilitate the process of their searching. Needless to say that the representatives of the ICRC enjoy free access to all the places of detention in the territory of Armenia and we expect this to happen elsewhere in the OCSE particularly in our immediate vicinity. We would like to underline also the importance of full, genuine and unrestricted cooperation between the offices of the ICRC in the region on this humanitarian matter.

We highly appreciate your continuous and effective cooperation with the Nagorno Karabakh authorities and the Office of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office.. Regular visits of the representatives of the Red Cross to the Line of Control and Armenian-Azerbaijani state border serve as a restraining factor against escalation.

We agree with You that the ICRC has high potential for building trust and confidence in the region. We are pleased to note that Armenia is continuously and strongly advocating the types of activities in this realm to which You referred in Your address. Strengthening the ceasefire regime and addressing the local needs of border communities through full compliance with the principles and norms of the international humanitarian law will pave the way for progress in the political process as much as violations of humanitarian law through degrading treatment of the prisoners of war or civilians held in captivity can further deepen mistrust among parties to the conflict . Unfortunately the latter cases have a tendency to become systematic in our region. It is our firm belief that no political calculations and objectives can justify targeting or mistreating civilian population.

Under these circumstances we see the role of ICRC in providing information and bringing national missions, Red Cross and Red Crescent societies together in helping all victims of the conflict regardless of their origin. To achieve these goals the ICRC should continue to remain depoliticized and impartial through human application of victim oriented approach. In putting forward the principle of human equality ICRC and OSCE can work together.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you, Mr. Maurer, all success in Your endeavours and offer full support and cooperation of Armenia to the noble mission of the International Committee of Red Cross.

Thank You.