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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT

**in response to the report by the Co-ordinator of
OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
as delivered by Ambassador Armen Papikyan
at the 1343rd meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

04 November 2021

Mr Chairperson,

The Delegation of Armenia warmly welcomes Ambassador Igli Hasani in his first appearance at the Permanent Council as Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities and thanks him for the report on the activities of his office.

Ambassador Hasani,

Together with the accomplishments you have also inherited challenges that you will be compelled to deal with in the years ahead.

Now, let me once again reiterate the long-standing position of my delegation that as an organization whose mission is to promote security and co-operation in Europe, OSCE's activities in the Economic and Environmental Dimension should primarily be aimed at enhancing the security of the participating States through economic and environmental co-operation. Unfortunately, the potential of the OSCE's Economic and Environmental Dimension in building trust and confidence among participating States is far from being fully utilised.

We share your assessment that the political environment has changed not for the better since the Bonn Conference and has reached the lowest level of trust and confidence among the participating States. We believe that this is, inter alia, due to the fact that not all the activities of the OCEEA were based on solidarity, transparency, equal and non-discriminatory partnership, mutual accountability and full respect for the interests of all participating States – commitments enshrined in the Hamburg MC decision, which, in our opinion, are indispensable for building bridges and promoting co-operation.

Mr. Co-ordinator,

For several years, the OCEEA, which is an asset of all 57 participating States, has been involved in the implementation of an extra-budgetary project "Promoting Green

Ports and Connectivity in the Caspian Sea Region", which clearly undermined these principles, further deepening the dividing lines and increasing mistrust. Ironically, this was a product of the same Hamburg MC decision, or rather its misinterpretation. We consider this a missed opportunity for the OSCE in general and for the OCEEA in particular. My delegation continues to expect the OCEEA to take effective measures to mitigate both actual and reputational damage. We are also convinced that in a consensus-based organization the approach "whoever pays the piper, calls the tune" is unacceptable.

Ambassador Hasani,

We welcome your intention to keep the issue of fighting corruption at the center of the OCEEA's activities. We firmly believe that supporting participating States in the fight against corruption is one of the main objectives of the Second Dimension, since corruption poses a direct threat to security and stability in the OSCE area. This is where the OCEEA can make a real impact.

We also acknowledge that the challenges of environmental protection and climate change are multifaceted. While recognizing the growing pressure of environmental issues on security, we strongly believe that the OSCE should focus primarily on issues arising from its mandate, and which have a direct and immediate impact on environment as a result of violations of OSCE commitments and the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, including non-use of force.

We also believe that, for the time being, a practical and pragmatic re-prioritization of activities will help improve the management of existing funds.

In closing, I would like to wish you, Ambassador Hasani, every success during your tenure and assure you of our readiness to effectively co-operate with you and your Office.

Thank you.