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

Statement
On the Case of Hrant Dink
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1128th Meeting of the
OSCE Permanent Council
January 19, 2017

Mr. Chairperson,

January 19th marks the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Hrant Dink, prominent Armenian-Turkish intellectual, chief editor of the Armenian newspaper Agos.

It should be recalled that the Delegation of Armenia has regularly raised this issue at the Permanent Council throughout last years. The response was always the same, we had been advised by the Turkish Delegation to wait for the results of legal proceedings.

Throughout this decade the developments in the trial did not identify the masterminds behind the murder and bring them to justice. Throughout long years of investigation there has been an impression that certain revelations happened along shift of political landscape and yet clear cut question who and why remained unanswered.

We welcome the press-release of the OSCE Representative on the freedom of media Ms. Dunja Mijatovic in this regard and fully share her assessment that “even a decade on, the masterminds behind this tragedy are still at large”.

We firmly believe that failure to address violence and killing of journalists, community leaders, and intellectuals creates a climate of impunity, thus encouraging intolerance towards any idea, which runs counter to official narratives.

We remember that Hrant Dink was stigmatized and even tried for his position and statements regarding the Armenian Genocide. Unfortunately, same environment of silencing voices seeking truth and justice prevail in Turkey after a decade of his murder. The suspension from parliamentary sessions of MP Garo Paylan as a punishment for his reference to the historic persecutions of the religious groups is the most recent example in this regard. There are reports that certain political parties are even attempting to initiate a criminal case against him equaling reference to the Armenian Genocide to a hate speech.

Turkey positions itself in this Organization as an advocate of tolerance and non-discrimination, particularly with regard religious groups. We firmly believe that if Turkish Delegation is really sincere in its claims it should not merely advocate the rights of newly created religious communities in certain participating states, but its

authorities themselves should show an example of such tolerance, at least towards indigenous religious minorities, whose small portions survived and currently exist in Turkey.

In the same vein, let me also recall our request to the Turkish Delegation to clarify the expropriation by the state authorities of the Armenian Church St. Giragos and its land property in Diyarbekir Sur District. It is almost a year that we have officially communicated this request through the Permanent Council and yet, despite assurances voiced out in the Annual Security Review Conference, no any response has been provided so far.

Thank You.