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

ENGLISH only

Statement

**On the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the
Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime**
**delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1083th Meeting of the OSCE
Permanent Council**
December 17, 2015

Mr. Chairman,

Last week, on December 9th, the international community observed the first ever International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime.

This international Day has been established in September by decision of the UN General Assembly. Earlier, in March 2015, UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the Prevention of Genocide which made a recommendation of designating such an International Day. Armenia, who has initiated these two resolutions, particularly values the fact that remembrance and prevention of genocide are strongly interlinked in the very name of the International Day. It is by remembering victims that we also prevent new genocides or their recurrence.

On the occasion of the first observance of this day the Secretary General Ban Ki Moon conveyed a message which inter alia stressed «This is an ideal time to reaffirm our commitment to prevent this serious international crime, honour the memory of the victims, and reaffirm the right to remedies and reparation, as recognized in international law».

The OSCE, as a security organization, is well placed to address critical issues of security related to the genocide prevention. Genocide remembrance and education are part of OSCE Human Dimension. In 2008 the Helsinki Ministerial Council adopted the Declaration on the 60th Anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide wherein it reaffirmed the significance of the Convention as an important international instrument for the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide.

The reference to the Convention is more than relevant with regard to the protection of religious and ethnic groups particularly in the OSCE neighborhood where mass killings of and numerous atrocities against Christians and other minorities have been taking place. The genocidal ideology of terrorist groups such as ISIL, Al-Nusra Front and other derivatives and associates of Al-Qaida, manifested also through their identity based crimes, create an urgent need to mainstream genocide prevention in all our efforts of protecting particular groups as identified by the Convention. The disrespect towards dignity and memory of the

victims of genocide, which is openly communicated through justification and denial of genocide, create breeding grounds for promoting their ideology and culture of «final solutions».

We believe that despite of failure to adopt the Declaration on Enhancing Efforts to Combat Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians at the Belgrade Ministerial Council we should make further efforts to mainstream Genocide prevention in our future commitments.

Thank you.