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

Statement
In Reply to Azerbaijan
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1128th Meeting of the OSCE
Permanent Council
January 19, 2017

Mr. Chairman,

We had been pleasantly surprised that Azerbaijani delegation initiated the current issue on the extension of the mandate of the Yerevan Office in anticipation if not “mea culpa” but at least some good news.

Though as we see it is difficult to expect good news from a delegation whose actions in the OSCE is highly appreciated in the Azerbaijani pro-government mass media under very self-congratulatory titles saying “Azerbaijan paralyzes the OSCE”.

We understand it is difficult to be doves at the PC and hawks at home at the same time and therefore first and foremost we advise Azerbaijan to stop politicizing and publicizing the technical decision on the extension of the mandate of Yerevan Office.

Just two days ago the spokesman of Azerbaijani ministry of foreign affairs in its statement to the press noted and I quote “Recently the Armenian Office of the OSCE have been engaged in the projects of demining in Karabakh and other occupied territories”.

Everyone sitting here knows that this is not true to put it in very mild diplomatic language. Lying to its public and presenting the OSCE as a battlefield where own diplomats are scoring victory after victory is not something that will really help anyone. In the same vein the official tweet of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Austria “Healing Armenians with poisoned mindset is for sure more difficult, but still not late” is unacceptable language for any diplomatic mission.

The German Chairmanship clearly assessed the humanitarian demining program in its final statement recalling the mission of its Special Representative to the Humanitarian Demining Center in Yerevan. We don’t have much to add to it. We heard other statements of Azerbaijani delegation attacking Yerevan Office in various other programs claiming that its assistance to Armenia went too far and the Office became a development agency and so forth.

The issue is not a particular program, but approach of Azerbaijan both to the OSCE and Armenia.

According to Azerbaijani delegation late Baku Office has never performed any conflict related program, yet it did not help and that Office did not survive either.

It is difficult to find any logic behind Azerbaijani actions rather than cleansing the entire region from the OSCE presence.

That being said let me first reiterate our firm support of the OSCE field operations, including the OSCE Office in Yerevan.

Second, the Armenian side has always expressed its willingness and readiness to listen to the concerns of other participating States in regard to the Office and to address them through dialogue and cooperation within the legal framework and practices of the OSCE. Yet what we see here is an attempt to exclude OSCE presence by putting forward unsubstantiated concerns not in good faith.

Thank you.