

Right of Reply by the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia**Working session 8: Tolerance and non-discrimination I, including:**

- Equal opportunity for women and men**
- Implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality**
- Violence against women**

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Mr. Moderator,

With regard to some comments relating to Armenia made by a civil society representative from Azerbaijan, which apparently copies and pastes some parts of her interventions under different topics of discussion, let me provide a brief historical overview. In 1988 during pogroms in the city of Sumgait in Azerbaijan hundreds of Armenian people, including women, even pregnant women and children were indiscriminately killed, raped, maimed and even burned alive for the only reason of their Armenian identity. Those horrific attacks were a direct result of vicious, racist Anti-Armenian propaganda by Azerbaijani authorities laying the grounds for future mass violence. The Sumgait pogroms were the beginning of violence against the Armenian minority, which escalated later to Kirovabad and Baku, culminating in forcible expulsion of around 400 thousand Armenians from Azerbaijan and in the early 90s war in Nagorno Karabakh, when the same practice of mass atrocities with mutilation of bodies and beheadings of Armenians was continued. Azerbaijan has taken steps to cover up those crimes against humanity, but even more disturbing is that the perpetrators of those events and similar violent attacks are glorified in Azerbaijan, which completely contradicts the depiction of their country which they are trying to impose here.

Thank you very much.