

19 September 2017

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
WORKING SESSION 7
Tolerance and non-discrimination I

September 14, 2017

As delivered by,

Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Head of the Delegation, Permanent Delegation of Armenia to the OSCE

Mme. Moderator,

Armenia sees certain merits to adopt need based and specified approach to promote and prevent the basic right of Christians, Jews, and Muslims and members of other religious groups, a right to be free from discrimination and violence.

It should be stressed that the members of these groups face different challenges in different parts of the OSCE and beyond.

Armenia is particularly concerned with the existential threats that Christians and Yazidis face today in the OSCE neighbouring regions. As it was mentioned earlier today by delegations of some participating states terrorist entities such as ISIL and we will add here ANF as well have perpetrated identity based mass atrocities against them. This genocidal violence should be unequivocally condemned and OSCE participating states should cooperate closely with each other to address protection needs of victims.

Aside from the neighbouring regions, hate motivated crimes increasingly target Christian communities in the OSCE area as well.

Armenia looks forward to be actively involved in OSCE cooperation which will aim at countering and preventing violence against Christians and other members of religious groups.

We believe that interreligious dialogue can create conducive framework for mutual understanding, respect and reconciliation in all circumstances including conflict situations.

As far as conflict situations are concerned, it is essential to avoid forging religious solidarity and seeking religious alliances by any party. This is a destructive approach which may only escalate and thus further protract conflicts.

Thank you