

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Opening Statement

Working Session 8

Rule of law including prevention of torture

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As delivered by

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Mr. Moderator,

At the outset, I would like to thank our panelists for their thoughtful presentations.

We welcome the emphasis on the human rights perspective in countering terrorism and torture.

The right to be free from torture and other ill-treatment is a basic human right full implementation of which requires good will, systematic work and international cooperation. Armenia acceded to the OPCAT and closely cooperates with the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture.

Yet, breaches of the OPCAT obligations unfortunately still persist in the OSCE area.

We are deeply concerned by continued cases of torture and extrajudicial killings of the citizens of Armenia by Azerbaijani armed forces and law enforcement agencies on the borderline territory.

Amid many cases the torture and killing of Mr. Karen Petrosyan, Armenian civilian from borderline settlement Chinari, in August 2014 is the most shocking one. Mr. Karen Petrosyan was subjected to humiliation, degrading treatment and torture in front of cameras. Post-mortem examination reaffirmed that Mr. Petrosyan was brutally tortured and killed. In recent times two other Armenian civilians from borderline settlements Manvel Saribekyan and Mamikon Khojoyan were also publicly humiliated, tortured in Azerbaijani custody which resulted in their deaths.

We strongly condemn these inhuman actions. We would like to remind the Azerbaijani side that systematic application of torture in conflict environment may amount to crimes against humanity.

As far as degrading treatment of the Armenian prisoners of war is concerned, the torture and degrading treatment of one prisoner of war, namely Hakob Injighuilyan is well documented by Azerbaijani side itself who filmed the interrogation and this coverage was found during the arrest of Azerbaijani subversive and criminal group of Hasan Hasanov, Shahbaz Guliyev, Dilham Askerov.

My delegation has already expressed its readiness to engage in dialogue with Azerbaijani delegation. Any dialogue presupposes at least basic level of good faith and integrity. Unfortunately

Azerbaijani delegation brings initially, I would stress intentionally, false information on which it is not possible to engage in dialogue. For example, just in this session the Azerbaijani delegate claimed that there are 4000 prisoners of war in Armenia as a result of military phase of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict back to early 90s. According to the ICRC there are 3714 missing persons from Azerbaijan, 426 from Nagorno-Karabakh and 401 from Armenia. We don't think that Azerbaijani delegation does not understand the difference between prisoner of war and missing person and thus we would call on Azerbaijani delegation to raise issues in good faith. In this constructive manner we would like to inform the Azerbaijani delegation that currently there is no any Azerbaijani prisoner of war in Armenia.

Thank you.