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

Statement

On the 20th Anniversary of the Ceasefire Agreement
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1000th Meeting of the
OSCE Permanent Council

May 15, 2014

Mr. Chairman,

On the occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Ceasefire Agreement My Delegation would like to state the following.

The Ceasefire Agreement between Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan marked the end of the military phase of the conflict. Its role was indispensable in establishing the necessary conditions on the ground for the launch of negotiation process for the political settlement of the conflict. These 20 years of peace provided us with the opportunity to build trust and confidence, create conditions for reconciliation, thus paving the way for the resolution of the conflict.

The Ceasefire Agreement was a product of long and difficult negotiations and was preceded by series of talks between parties concerned: first and foremost meetings between Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Azerbaijani Republic and the Foreign Minister of Nagorno Karabakh on September 12-13, 1993 in Moscow, where a Joint Communique was adopted and followed by meeting of Vice Prime Ministers of Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan on the Line of Contact on September 25, 1993, as well as a number of other meetings in Moscow in late 1993 and early 1994. The culmination of these rounds of talks was the signing of the Bishkek Protocol between Speakers of Parliaments of Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan and the Agreement on Ceasefire, reached on May 12, 1994 and signed by the Ministers of Defense of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the Commander of the Nagorno Karabakh Armed Forces.

We would like to refer to the recent statement of Edward Nalbandian, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, who stressed, that like the Minsk Group Co-Chair states, “we have many times urged to respect ceasefire agreement reached in May 1994. It is vital to exclude the use of force, thereby creating utmost favorable conditions for the success of the negotiation process. Sniper shootings along the Line of Contact, the human losses are unacceptable. Every new casualty deepens the gap of mistrust and

misunderstanding between our societies and further protracts political settlement of the conflict. The OSCE monitors were not able to have neither the mandate nor the resources to identify those responsible, to reduce the reported thousands of ceasefire violations every year”.

Mr. Chairman,

Unfortunately, Azerbaijan has rejected and continues rejecting numerous proposals made by Co-Chair countries to consolidate ceasefire, withdraw snipers from the Line of Contact, and create a mechanism of investigation of incidents and ceasefire violations.

The Azerbaijani side does not respect even its own commitments on maintaining and strengthening the ceasefire - not only according to the provisions of the Ceasefire Agreement, reached between Azerbaijan, Karabakh and Armenia on May 12, 1994, but also the Ceasefire Consolidation Agreement, reached in the same three-party format on February 4, 1995.

We resolutely agree that peoples should be prepared for peace, not war. Unfortunately until now instead of preparing its people for peace the Azerbaijani leadership has been doing just the reverse. In spite of the several appeals of the international community to refrain from provocative rhetoric and actions, Azerbaijan continues its bellicose statements, glorification of murderers and persecution of peace advocates, the propaganda of xenophobia, intolerance and hatred, which leads to raising tension and escalation of the situation in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

Armenia on numerous occasions has commended and stressed the importance of the consistent efforts of the heads of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries – Russia, USA and France, in supporting the sides to the conflict to reach exclusively peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue.

Like the Co-Chairs, we continue to believe that the elements outlined in the statements of the heads of the Co-Chair countries in L'Aquila, Muskoka, Deauville, Los Cabos and Enniskillen over the last years can be the foundation of reaching a lasting peaceful settlement of the conflict. We share the Co-Chairs' opinion, expressed many times, that those elements must be seen as an integrated whole and the attempts to give priority to some elements will make it impossible to reach the settlement.

Armenia has on several occasions reiterated and once again re-affirms its commitment to the principles of international law, particularly non-use of force or the threat of force, equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and territorial integrity. We have several times emphasized that without the full fledged involvement of Nagorno-

Karabakh in the negotiation process, it will be impossible to achieve the resolution of the conflict.

Together with the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs Armenia will consistently continue to exert joint efforts towards exclusively peaceful settlement of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Karabakh.

Thank You.