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

ENGLISH only

**Statement**  
**on the Address by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe**  
**by the Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia**  
**to the OSCE Ambassador Jivan Tabibian**  
**at the 518th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

**22 July 2004, Vienna**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As usual our delegation listens with great care to what the Secretary General of the Council of Europe has to say. We welcome him and we regret that this is the last time here at the PC. We have gotten used to each other over these years. Some of us, old-timers like him, have had this exchange a few times. What distinguishes this time is that since regrettably this is his last appearance what we have to say to him is not fair to think of as lobbying, as most people continue to do, always trying to send a message to him for what he should be doing or not doing, what to pay attention and what not to pay attention to. It frees him and us from playing that indirect political game. This is the freedom that allows reflection and it is reflection provoked by some of the thoughts and things that the Secretary General said based on his experience. What we appreciate enormously is that though he may not stay in his present position, he still remains a dreamer for the organization. Typically, when people quit, their dreams come to if not an end but to a sort of wake-up. What gives him the right to dream are that his previous experiences have encouraged him to be hopeful and optimistic, even as he continues to recognize the things that remain not done, which could have been or should have been done.

A lot of my colleagues and all of us here, because of the Secretary General's visit, talk about basically the most appropriate issue, which is the relationship of the Council of Europe with the OSCE. Outside of that, we countries, have our own relations with the Council of Europe as members. But what concerns us here is the interaction between the two. Let us first remember that membership to the OSCE is based simply on the condition of having sovereignty within a broad geographic area and the sovereignty is defined in relatively legal terms. While membership to the Council of Europe is a more conditional affair. It is not only how you behave after you go in, but how you must promise to behave before you go in. So, the Council of Europe in that sense is, if not more selective, at least more conditional. At the OSCE, entry criteria are very different, but one way or another both of them are essentially committed to push forward norms, compliance, commitments and so on. This distinction needs to be kept in mind. Also, the Council of Europe is approaching its completion, which here we have theoretically already fulfilled; but then again, you never know. The interesting thing about history is that you always find out somebody you forgot or somebody you should have forgotten. What it allows both of us together, the Council of Europe and

the OSCE, is to be a double-bridge between other institutions. For us both are primarily a bridge, though not necessarily to be walked every day, a bridge to the European Union. They are the access points, if not necessarily to join, but to communicate with the EU. Since our memberships overlap so deeply, for the time being that overlap is essentially a channel of very open communication; perhaps not perfect communication, but the most open we can find. Armenia is a member of both the CoE and OSCE and we must say it is only a member of these inclusive organizations in addition to the United Nations. For us the well being, the effectiveness, the performance, the rules of both organizations remain extremely important; to make the OSCE-Council of Europe relationship if not more solid, at least to make them more explicit and allow greater concrete co-operation. In that sense, our delegation appreciates also the Norwegian initiative and we find it potentially very useful indeed.

Mr. Chairman,

May I say that some of the objectives of the two organizations vary somewhat, though we share a lot. We share specially a lot of specific objectives. The most obvious case where we must and do work together very well and must work even more closely is in an instance like human trafficking. That issue is such that both our interests, concerns, commitments and "Action Plans" widely overlap. We are very glad that they overlap because my delegation has always made a distinction between overlapping things and redundant things. We overlap but we are not redundant.

The second item is that we must also look at what is common not only to our activities, but our principles. The best example is that we both advocate and are based on a common objective of the rule of law. But as you know, the rule of law is a very tricky business, because law is a tricky business. The dilemma facing both organizations is always "whose" law and who determines whether the law according to which you act is a law that meets certain standards. Here the two organizations, like each other, allow greater flexibility in judging its practice in some places, while being a little bit more strict, not to say discriminatory in others. My delegation takes great encouragement in your written text of the reference in saying that this business of whatever we do will be addressed to all without distinction.

There are some notions where our organizations are not similar in the language they use and I want to conclude with that. Number one: a very minor issue for us, for the overall OSCE, but of significance to some states: we like the fact that perhaps the Council of Europe is ahead of us in not using what has become a meaningless phrase "regional conflicts". There are no regional conflicts. There are conflicts that happen in regions, but they are not regional conflicts. We have had the experience of regional conflicts, where member states within a given region of the whole of Europe are in some kind of what I call infectious confrontation, military confrontation and other forms of hostility, claims and counterclaims. It is the kind of conflict that happens during the disintegration of large or small empires. Now, we simply have conflicts, and though they are unresolved, some call them frozen, we should not characterize any "region" as being "a region of conflict". We welcome that sensitivity whether it was deliberate, inadvertent or due to a different agenda. Whichever it is or was, we would appreciate if it were to become a sort of a model for us here at the OSCE to follow.

Let me conclude by saying that there are other things in your presentation that we like and some that we like even more. For your Summit you put certain priorities of notions. We hear the word "Summit" enviously. We seem to have a difficulty getting a Summit going because our ambitions are such that for us, it is important to have a Summit if we can get the most and the highest representation. I think that if we had the agenda for a Summit and the conviction that our weight counts, we could hold a Summit too. We enviously congratulate the Council of Europe for having taken that initiative and even knowing what are the issues to be discussed and pursued.

May we approvingly pull out of your text, some words about what objectives have to be pursued. To us they sound both fascinating and worthy of further attention. One of them falls outside the OSCE's concerns, unfortunately, and the other, is a variation on our theme and we hope, while we keep our distinctions, we communicate more about their intentions.

The notion we miss here at the OSCE and we envy the CoE is the concept of social solidarity. At the OSCE we believe in economic development; we believe in peace, we believe in the rule of law, we believe in all that, but social solidarity for us is not either an end or a means, simply because we think it cannot be a matter of collective or international policy. I am glad the Council of Europe has a slightly different take on that issue.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, may I ask the Secretary General to tell us what this wonderful new phrase of "democratic security" is? Not because we do not understand it, but because it is based on an assumption, which we both like and wonder whether our optimism is justified. It is the idea, in fact, that democratic practices reduce conflict and provide security. Yes, democratic practices provide enormous amount of personal security, human security, individual security, a security, as you said which will affect the quality of our lives every day. But whether they provide security in terms of necessarily the reduction of conflicts and their prevention, unless we give to the concept of democracy a certain twist and a certain minimum content and a certain logic, and a certain culture in which there are issues of tolerance and issues of multiculturalism and so on. Democratic practices in themselves are not sufficient to either prevent or to resolve conflicts either between states or within states. Even though preventing conflict within states will be greatly enhanced if democratic practices make all citizens equal citizens.

With this Mr. Chairman, may I wish to the Secretary General success and express again to him our wish for success in his next endeavors and express to him our appreciation for his commitment and work in the last few years. As you know, my Government had many dealings with him and we appreciate every effort he has made.

Thank you very much.