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ENGLISH only



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

**Statement**

**in response to the Report of Ambassador Alexis Chahtahtinsky, OSCE Project  
Co-ordinator in Baku**

**delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1009th Meeting of the  
OSCE Permanent Council**

July 17, 2014

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to welcome Ambassador Alexis Chahtahtinsky and thank him for his report.

We took note of the first period of activities of the Project Co-ordinator which as we understood mainly focused on the transformation of the Office itself.

My Delegation supports further engagement of the Office of Project Coordinator with the civil society and NGOs, which would help to better understand the needs of the host country in all three dimensions. Indeed, civil society can provide valuable contribution to the programmatic activities of the Office. This would certainly bring more regional coherence to the work of the OSCE.

We would like to reiterate our concerns regarding the inclusion of conflict related issues such as displaced population in the programme outline and programmatic activities of the Project Co-ordinator. We would encourage the Project Co-ordinator not to duplicate existing relevant OSCE mandates in this regard.

We took note of the four programmes of the Office approved by the Government of Azerbaijan. In that regard, we would like to inquire Ambassador Shahtahtinsky, how does he intend to address in his programmatic activities the recommendations of the OSCE institutions such as ODIHR and the RFoM, which are matter of regular discussions in the Permanent Council. In particular, we mean the recommendations in the field of freedom of expression, freedom of media, including protection of journalists, freedom of assembly and right to fair trial.

The report stipulates the existence of “historic traditions” of tolerance and non discrimination in Azerbaijan which should be further developed through the assistance of the Office setting an objective of strengthening security and stability in the region as well. Leaving history and traditions to be discussed between the Office

and the Government of Azerbaijan, we would like to encourage the Office to raise the issues of hate crime and its glorification, racist public discourse, discriminatory practices of denying entrance to the country persons for their ethnic and national origin, an issue which was reflected in the ODIHR 2014 baseline study on cross border mobility in the OSCE region. We agree that addressing these problems of host country can contribute to the security and stability in the South Caucasus.

Lastly, Azerbaijan remains one of the few countries in the OSCE imposing local income tax which results in subsequent compensation paid by all participating states. We are concerned that this compensation is significantly higher than Azerbaijan's financial contribution to the organization as participating state. We expressed hope that during the negotiations of new mandate this issue would be addressed. In this regard, we would like to request information on the current state of play on this particular issue.

In conclusion, we would like to once again extend to Ambassador Chahtahtinsky our best wishes for all success in his future endeavours.

Thank You.

### **Right of Reply**

Mr. Chairman,

All our questions and concerns were addressed to the Project Coordinator and I am sure that Ambassador Chahtahtinsky is very able and experienced diplomat to address them.

We regret that the Azerbaijani Ambassador used this opportunity to repeat once again Azerbaijani baseless allegations against Armenia. We would recommend the Azerbaijani side to focus more on the process of negotiations.

Thank You.