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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 911th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

10 May 2012

**Regarding the parliamentary elections in Armenia**

Mr. Chairperson,

In connection with the question under discussion today regarding the election of deputies to the National Assembly of Armenia on 6 May, we should like to mention a number of substantive points.

Around 650 international experts, including 173 persons making up the large mission sent by the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), were involved in monitoring the election campaign and voting. The Russian representatives played an active part in the observation process, both as part of the CIS mission and within the Central Election Commission of Russia.

According to the head of the CIS mission, all the necessary conditions had been met in Armenia for the preparation and holding of the parliamentary elections, which “were free and democratic and in keeping with the letter and the spirit of the Electoral Code of Armenia, while the violations recorded were not systemic and did not affect the free expression of the will of the electorate”. It should be mentioned that the CIS long-term observers visited 26 electoral districts across the Republic, met with representatives of the campaign offices of various political parties and carefully monitored the preparations for the elections. According to their assessments, “the political parties did not have any complaints regarding the election campaign, and it was marked by a high level of involvement on the part of civil society”.

As you are aware, the mission sent by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has also published its preliminary conclusions, drawing considerable attention to the technical deficiencies revealed during the elections. The significant conclusions regarding “an unequal playing field” in the election campaign and the general lack of confidence among political parties and the general public in the integrity of the electoral process were made on the basis of those deficiencies. Thus, the sovereign will of the citizens of Armenia and the election results are in effect called into question.

This practice of nitpicking at technical deficiencies and blowing them up into something political is for us unacceptable. This needs to stop. It casts a shadow on the

reputation of the ODIHR and its claims to objectivity and professionalism. I might recall that on 6 May presidential elections were also held in France and parliamentary elections in Greece. However, we are not discussing those elections, and the ODIHR did not monitor them. Is it possible that everything proceeded without any problems there?

Double standards of this kind by the ODIHR must be examined in detail during the Second Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting in Vienna in July of this year on the subject of election observation.

Thank you for your attention.