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

Statement

**in response to the Address of H.E. Sebastian Kurz Federal Minister for Europe,
Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1108th Meeting of the OSCE
Permanent Council
July 14, 2016**

Mr. Chairperson,

We warmly welcome H.E. Sebastian Kurz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria to the Permanent Council and thank him for the comprehensive address.

Mr. Minister,

Austria will assume the Chairmanship of the OSCE in a complicated period for European security, which is characterized with the threat of use of force and use of force to suppress human rights and fundamental freedoms, including equal rights and self-determination of peoples, unwillingness of some participating States to ensure genuine commitment to the OSCE principles and values, lack of political will to make use of the OSCE as a platform of equal and cooperative dialogue. The attempts to introduce artificial hierarchy among the OSCE fundamental principles coupled with the efforts of concealing and justifying gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms have been eroding the European security.

The OSCE as the largest regional security organization and platform of equal dialogue is well placed to deal with outstanding issues of European security on the basis of its values, norms and principles, reflected in the Helsinki Final Act. We should make full use of the comparative advantages and toolbox of the OSCE, namely comprehensive security approach, agreed negotiation formats, field presences and institutions to exclude use of force from the international policy, develop inclusive dialogue, bridge gaps, build trust and confidence, deal with the past and promote reconciliation.

Mr. Minister,

We took note of the intention of the incoming Austrian Chairmanship to promote resolution of protracted conflicts. We firmly believe that unequivocal political support by the OSCE Chairmanship to the agreed formats is important for ensuring sustainable and efficient implementation of their mandates and withstanding attempts to undermine their efforts.

Regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict we encourage the incoming Chairmanship to support the efforts of the Minsk Group co-Chairs in addressing the consequences of the large scale military aggression against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, in particular promoting expansion of the PRCiO Office and its monitoring capacities and establishment of investigative mechanism into ceasefire violations, agreed during the meeting at the level

of Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Vienna and confirmed in Saint-Petersburg. Strengthening of the permanent presence of the international community in the NK conflict zone is crucial for the prevention of further outbreak of military actions.

Mr. Minister,

We encourage the Austrian Chairmanship to prioritize the issue of arms control and CSBMs, which are one of the cornerstones of the security and stability in the OSCE area. Effective legally binding arms control regime and its all-weather implementation could be crucial in ensuring practical application of the principle of non-use of force or threat of force. It will promote military transparency, trust and predictability, as well as prevent military buildup and outbreak of conventional warfare. We will support further dialogue on modernization of the Vienna Document, as a follow up to the efforts undertaken by the German Chairmanship and also reviewing the CFE Treaty. Armenia has established a solid bilateral cooperation framework with Austria on the topic of SSR/G and we are pleased to note that the SSR/G will be highly featured in the list of priorities of the Austrian chairmanship.

We will support the Austrian Chairmanship in its efforts to pursue the PC decision 1202 on ICT CBMs, in particular to encourage full implementation of the commitments undertaken therein.

We support focus of the incoming Austrian Chairmanship on combating terrorism and radicalization. We attach utmost importance to full and unconditional implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions 2170, 2178 and 2199 by all participating states as it is envisaged by the Basel and Belgrade Ministerial Declarations, including in regard to fighting against the ISIL, Al Nusra Front and other terrorist organizations associated with Al Qaeda. This is particularly relevant in the context of addressing the challenge of the ongoing refugee and migration crisis.

We would welcome streamlining of efforts in countering radicalization with special focus on youth, since the latter is more prone to radicalization, in particular in conditions of state propaganda of hatred, xenophobia and intolerance.

We encourage the Austrian Chairmanship to streamline in its human dimension agenda the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the population living in the conflict zones. Another important area is remembrance and education of genocides, which is important in our efforts to prevent mass atrocities, to counter the policy of “final solutions”, to provide guarantees of non-recurrence and finally achieve reconciliation.

We share the Austrian Chairmanship’s focus on the topic of green economy and building partnerships for security. Inclusive economic participation and partnership is crucial for promoting trust and cooperation at all levels of governance. Second dimension has untapped potential in the area of confidence building. We need to utilize it on the basis of solidarity, partnership and taking into account the interests of all participating States. The medieval siege through decades long policy of closed borders should remain in the past.

We would like to stress the important role OSCE field operations play in supporting implementation of our commitments and translating them into best practice. We expect that the Austrian Chairmanship will provide support to the OSCE Office in Yerevan.

In conclusion, we would like to wish every success to You, Mr. Minister, in Your future responsible mission.

Thank You.