



**STATEMENT**

**In Response to the Report of ODIHR Director Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir**

**as delivered by Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Permanent Representative of Armenia, at the  
1196<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
October 4, 2018**

Mr. Chair,

We would like to thank ODIHR Director Ms Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir for presenting the role of ODIHR in conducting 2018 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.

We appreciate the leadership of the Italian Chairmanship and ODIHR in convening this meeting under not conventional circumstances. We understand that all OSCE participating states are bound by commitment to conduct HDIM every year. We hope that in future the adoption of HDIM agenda will be approached in sincere manner without an attempt to use it as impediment to the meeting itself.

Armenia expressed its readiness to join consensus on the final draft of HDIM agenda once the consensus was there though we had reservations thereon.

We regretted that the final draft agenda did not explicitly envisage a session wherein human rights and fundamental freedoms of people affected throughout conflict cycle would be discussed in comprehensive and non-discriminative manner.

We strongly believe that the relevant aspects of conflicts, as cross-dimensional issues, should be discussed in the main events of all three dimensions including Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in even and balanced manner.

The current situation when they are discussed in the main event of one dimension and neglected in the other dimension does not promote effective and even approach both towards conflicts and OSCE dimensions.

Mr. Chair,

The 2018 HDIM was good opportunity for Armenia not only for the Government representatives, but also Human Rights Defender and representatives of civil society to present democratic changes occurred in April-May. We are grateful to other delegations for their comments and we express our strong interest to cooperate with interested OSCE participating states and ODIHR in implementing our joint human dimension commitments.

The human dimension implementation meetings have never lacked passion, dedication and hot debates. The 2018 HDIM was not exception as well. Certainly, there are certain attempts to hijack place of civil society and spoil dialogue by dispatching number of GONGOs who did not shy away to speak on behalf of their own Government in HDIM.

Some of those attempts were particularly deplorable. Here, I first of all mean the conduct of a GONGO under the name of Azerbaijani Institute of Democracy and Human Rights who throughout its statement showed picture of the Armenian civilian captured in Azerbaijan in humiliated situation. My delegation called on ODIHR to examine this incident and prevent further incidents of this kind.

We also regret that those Governments who effectively prevent their civil society participation including through travel bans pursue an agenda of restricting civil society from other participating states by distorted interpretation of Chapter 4 para 16 of Helsinki Document.

Attempt to impede participation of civil society organization on the ground of conflict perception is unacceptable.

Armenia will object any attempts to create a mechanism which will be instrumentalized in order to silence undesirable voices and turn HDIM into an imitation of dialogue.

We consider that the current arrangements establish clear and transparent procedure for registration of civil society.

I thank you.