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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

Opening Statement
of the Delegation of Armenia
at the 1054th Meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation

13 September 2023

I would like to warmly welcome and congratulate Canada on assuming the Chairpersonship of the Forum for Security Cooperation. We thank you for outlining your priorities and goals for the upcoming trimester.

We have taken good note of the topics for security dialogues, which are timely and relevant and address the issues pertinent to conflict situations. In this regard we hope that there will be proportional attention towards all conflict and crisis situations in the OSCE area.

Distinguished colleagues,

Peace is not sustainable without protection and promotion of human rights, including human rights of women. “Women, peace and security” is among our priorities and Armenia firmly believes that women have a key role to play in all stages of the conflict cycle, and peace is more sustainable with full, equal and meaningful participation of women. It is particularly important to ensure protection of the rights of women, and girls from gender-based violence during armed conflicts and in conflict affected areas, as cases of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment against women, including female service members and civilians continue to occur in many conflict zones, including in our region.

In this context I should recall that from 19-20 October 2023 WPL Democracy, Peace and Security Summit will take place in Yerevan, Armenia. WPL has emerged as a global force, committed to increase both the number and the influence of women in political leadership. Despite commitments taken by states with the adoption in 2000 of the UNSC resolution 1325, women continued to be excluded from or have limited participation in conflict prevention, peace negotiations and decision making during conflict. Recent data also indicates that it will take generations to close the gap between women and men in peace building and security sector. Data by the UN agencies demonstrate that women negotiators are more likely to achieve more sustainable peace agreement.

Madame Chair,

We also welcome the Canadian FSC Chairpersonship's intention to conduct a security dialogue on the International Humanitarian Law. This topic is particularly relevant against the backdrop of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh caused by the unlawful blockade of the Lachin Corridor by Azerbaijan, which is a part of the wider picture of the decades-long incitement of hatred against Armenians, policy of use of force and threat of force, grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law – all constituting warning signs of genocidal intent.

Madame Chair,

We fully rely on your Chairpersonship's even-handed and inclusive approach to all the security challenges in the entire OSCE area of responsibility and vigilance to prevent any attempts to misuse the FSC platform for political manipulations and abuse of its mechanisms in search of justifications of the use of force and legitimization of its outcomes.

Dear colleagues,

The security situation in our region, in particular, on the border of Armenia and in Nagorno-Karabakh has remained tense, while the illegal blockade of the Lachin Corridor and the inhumane siege of 120 000 people of Nagorno-Karabakh have been going on for 9 months now, accompanied by complete disruption of gas and electricity supply, abductions, unlawful arrest and detention, deliberately targeting of civilians during the agricultural work.

Yesterday, during the Special PC meeting deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia presented in details the dire humanitarian situation in Nagorno-Karabakh due to the illegal blockade of the Lachin Corridor by Azerbaijan in violations of its international commitments and in defiance of the legally binding Order of the ICJ.

Deputy Minister also spoke about the real threat of a new military escalation and aggression of Azerbaijan against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh in light of the dramatic accumulation of military personnel and military offensive hardware by Azerbaijan near the border of Armenia and along the Line of Contact with Nagorno-Karabakh, accompanied by the deliberate and systematic disinformation campaign full of allegations directed against Armenia, as well as almost daily violations of ceasefire actively targeting the defense positions of Nagorno-Karabakh and border outposts of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia.

We believe that this Forum should remain seized of the matter.

In conclusion, let me assure you, distinguished chair, that you have full support of this delegation to all your undertakings and we wish you very successful chairpersonship ahead. We also welcome Cyprus as a new member of the FSC Troika.

I thank you.