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

ENGLISH only

Statement

**in response to the Presentation of June Zeitlin, Special Representative of the
OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 977th Meeting of the OSCE
Permanent Council**

December 12, 2013

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to thank Ms June Zeitlin for her comprehensive report where she made references on her recent visit to Armenia. Armenia has been among four OSCE participating states who extended invitation to the Special Representative this year.

We have noticed that on many occasions the current report exemplifies gender issues relevant to the OSCE area within the concrete case of Armenia. Therefore I appreciate close attention of the Special Representative to my country and consider it also as a call for closer cooperation with other participating states.

We believe that the recent visit and upcoming report of the Special Representative can provide useful points of references towards further pursuing the agenda of the Armenian Government to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

Since there were certain developments after the visit of the Special Representative we deem it appropriate to refer to some of them, namely the session of the Women Council which was chaired by the Prime Minister on November 22. On the eve of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Women's Council reiterates its determination to continue efforts towards prevention and elimination of violence against women.

When it comes to the efforts of the Government to introduce certain legislative measures aimed at addressing domestic violence, it should be mentioned that the Government undertook a holistic approach taking as a departure point 2012-2016 Strategic Program of Legal and Judicial Reforms. To this end the Ministry of Justice has been tasked to make amendments and supplements to the Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Administrative Procedure Code and Code on Administrative Infringement. In our view, all aspects related to domestic violence should be considered, including prevention, protection and prosecution. Among first results of this process we refer to the new draft law "On social assistance" which is under discussion at the National Assembly. The Article 2 of this draft law provides definition of domestic violence.

We have noticed that the efforts of the Government of Armenia to ensure more equal political representation are acknowledged in the report. Though those achievements are still modest but we are ready to further capitalize on them and advance greater equality in cooperation with political parties.

The gender issues create an important platform for cooperation among international organizations including Council of Europe, OSCE and UN and the representatives of civil society. We hope that the recent visit and the upcoming report of the Special Representative will also contribute towards preparation of Armenia's upcoming report to the UN CEDAW.

Having said this, I would like to reiterate Armenia's readiness to closely cooperate with this mandate in order to further consolidate and implement OSCE Human Dimension commitments.

Thank You.