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

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**Speech Delievered by Ambassador J. Tabibian at the  
Conference on Anti-Semitism  
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Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson.

We have a few points to make. First, let me speak as the delegate of Armenia and say that since one of the intentions of this Conference is also to generate concrete ideas and come up with specific things to do, in addition to a general debate, let us say at the outset that our delegation is very much in favor of trying to adopt some or most of the suggestions made by Mayor Giuliani from the American delegation. We think they can be looked into and at some point transformed into an OSCE wide plan, with projects and commitments.

Let me also say that my Government's commitment to the protection of all minorities remains unshaken. As a nation, Armenians around the world are minorities outside of their own country; that is why we are sensitive to the rights of minorities. We mean by that not only equality before the law, but particularly also freedom of exercising language, religion and culture. In short the ability to

engage in a life, characteristic and wholesome in its own way. True, people say there is tolerance in Armenia, but we have a dilemma, nevertheless. What happens is that unfortunately and fortunately, when a country does not have a long history of eruptions, of tragic and huge racial persecutions, there sets in at times a form of complacency. Armenia is probably not the only country, where there may be such complacency. However, we think in our own country what we should guard against is that sense of complacency that says, since it has not been a major problem before, it cannot be in the future. We are part of a world where in continuous crosscurrents of events, impressions and media, imported ideas come and fertilize and sometimes what is fertilized is contaminated. Our commitment therefore is to guard against the effects of this complacency and instead to try to mobilize, through preventive mobilization, in order to avoid that which is extreme, ugly and extremist elsewhere, so they do not similarly infect and propagate themselves in Armenia.

A few more things. Let me just say that as I listened to these discussions the last two days, we must also guard against, and this is an important item, the instrumentalization of evil. At times accusations become political instruments. We know how horrific is the accusation of anti-semitism, because the crime itself is horrific. We must guard not to trivialize and banalize that accusation as an instrument of political design. To denounce others as anti-semitic for the sake of making political points can be in fact a form of unfair instrumentalization of a

crime which ought to be in itself sufficient to make us all worry, be shocked and take positive corrective action.

Allow me to conclude with two specific remarks.

It is true, explanations are sometimes taken cynically, because it is assumed that behind explanations, are justifications. While I will not advocate explanations, I will advocate that every single one of us, every person, we owe to ourselves some understanding. We must first and foremost understand what is it that causes the breakdown of civility? What is it that causes the breakdown of humanness whereby we end up committing atrocities, exclusions, discriminations, ultimately genocides? The denial of the humanness of the other is ultimately nothing but the admission of the failure of our own humanness. In that sense, humanity has not come a very long way. It seems that we are all capable, continuously to fail in our own humanness as we perpetrate inhuman acts against others. Education and media have a role to play in it. I think we should look into it a lot more carefully than just casually. We must realize that a lot depends on what I call a distorted cultivation of the sense of identity. Identity should not be based on the definition of the other; rather identity should be from the inside out, whether nationalism, community, ethnicity or religion. We seem to be, all of us, tempted to define our identities in the denial of the distinctive intrinsic values of the other.

Thank you very much.