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PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

**Statement
In Response to the Special Representative of the OSCE
Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Corruption, Professor Anita Ramasastry
as delivered by Ambassador Andranik Hovhannisyan
at the 1502nd Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

12 December 2024

Madam Chair,

The Delegation of Armenia welcomes Professor Anita Ramasastry to the Permanent Council and thanks her for the comprehensive report. We reiterate our strong support for the important work of the Special Representative and recognize the efforts aimed at combating corruption and promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance across the OSCE region.

Madam Chair,

Armenia demonstrated an unwavering commitment to combating corruption and building a more transparent and accountable governance system. In two years after the 2018 Velvet Revolution, Armenia improved its ranking in the corruption perception index of Transparency International from 105th to 60th place. Furthermore, its score increase was the second-best improvement worldwide.

The anti-corruption efforts remain a priority for the Government of Armenia reflected in numerous documents, notably the Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan for 2023–2026. Within this framework, comprehensive institutional anti-corruption mechanisms have been established in Armenia to support among others the activities of the Corruption Prevention Commission, the Anti-Corruption Court and Anti-Corruption Committee. In particular, from 2021 to 2023, the Anti-Corruption Committee investigated over 2,000 criminal proceedings.

We would like to use this opportunity to recall that our cooperation with the Office of Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, resulted in assisting the Government of Armenia in establishing more effective anti-corruption mechanisms, namely through the successful implementation of the project on “Strengthening anti-corruption reform in Armenia”.

Madam Chair,

Based on our experience, we can affirm that the political will of the government to combat corruption remains sustainable when it is driven by strong public demand. Just as corruption undermines society and erodes its fabric, anti-corruption efforts can consolidate people, fostering a society built on trust and strong ownership. The people of Armenia have given a clear and strong anti-corruption mandate to the Government, which does its best to fulfill the aspirations of our citizens.

Distinguished Special Representative,

As your report shows, corruption in its various forms and manifestations, remains a challenge at both national and international levels. We believe that this threat becomes especially acute when corruption is entrenched as a state-sponsored policy, strategically exported through multilateral and bilateral channels. This practice weaponizes corruption, using it as a tool to exert influence with destabilizing consequences. It can extend to the foreign governments, institutions and parliaments. However, the international organizations and interparliamentary platforms have also not been immune from this scourge and the recent high-profile investigations come to prove this.

In some instances, corrupt practices have been also used to create alternative civil society settings, or so-called governmental NGOs, which perform as tools to promote fictitious narratives to advance the political agenda of the States that created them.

We are also concerned by the appalling cases of intimidations, harassment, blackmail and abduction of journalists especially those who engage in investigative activities and expose corruption. In this regard we would like to highlight particular vulnerabilities faced by the women journalists who may be subjected to gender-based discrimination or specifically targeted online and offline, including through blackmailing with private content. The cases of persecution, and even killing of investigative journalists have a chilling effect on the respect of human rights and hence should be resolutely condemned. Justice and accountability should be ensured, including in the cases of State involvement.

Armenia believes that the OSCE has a niche to address instances of systemic corruption and related human rights abuses.

Madam Special Representative,

We reiterate our appreciation for your efforts during your tenure and wish every success to your future endeavors.

Thank you.