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Human Dimension Implementation Meeting  
WORKING SESSION 4  
Rule of Law I,

As delivered by

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Madam Moderator,

At the outset, I would like to thank our panelists for their thoughtful presentations.

We welcome the emphasis on the human rights perspective in countering terrorism and torture.

We agree that the fight against terrorism should not be pursued at the expense of human rights and wider international cooperation is required to achieve common standards here. We also subscribe to the view that the respect of human rights of the victims of terrorist attacks is important dimension of our work.

Unfortunately, there were instances of using terrorists as tool to inflict grave and massive violation of human rights in the OSCE area. Currently we can observe similar developments in the immediate neighborhood of the OSCE yet in much higher scales.

We are extremely concerned that the fundamentalist groups use the territories of the OSCE participating states to initiate cross border attacks against ethnic and religious minorities in Syria and Iraq. Only three days ago the Saint Martyrs Armenian Church in Deir el-Zor, Syria dedicated to the memory of the Armenian Genocide, which housed the remains of its many victims was exploded and destroyed. And this is only the latest crime of the terrorist group of the “Islamic State”.

We would like to recall that the Parliamentary Assembly in its last annual session called on the OSCE participating states to prevent the use of their territories by terrorist groups initiating cross border attacks against ethnic and religious minorities in Syria and we would like to recommend to the participating states, particularly those having common border with Syria, to heed this call.

The right to be free from torture and other ill-treatment is a basic human right full implementation of which requires good will, systematic work and international cooperation. Armenia acceded to the OPCAT and closely cooperates with the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture. Last year the members of the Subcommittee visited Armenia and prepared a confidential report which was made public by the Government of Armenia with the view to garner more societal involvement and oversight in and over this issue.

The upholding of the international obligations on the fight and prevention of torture is a key to the eradication of this practice.

Yet, breaches of the OPCAT obligations unfortunately still persist in the OSCE area. Just one week ago the delegation of the Subcommittee has been compelled to suspend its visit to Azerbaijan given the constant restrictions and prevention of visiting places of the detentions by the authorities of that country. The communication of the Subcommittee dated September 17 furthermore clearly establishes that Azerbaijan breaches the obligations under the optional protocol.

It should be reminded that breach of the Optional protocol came amid worrying case of torture and degrading treatment which led to the death of the Armenian citizen Karen Petrosyan, a distracted inhabitant of the borderline Armenian village, who accidentally found himself on the other side of the border. Mr. Karen Petrosyan was subjected to humiliation, degrading treatment and torture in front of cameras under fabricated accusations of being an Armenian saboteur and serviceman. The Azerbaijani official version of this case, which comes in sharp contradiction with the video coverage of the other Azerbaijani sources, underwent editing and is so ill-made that does not leave any doubt that the Armenian civilian was intentionally tortured and killed. Let us remind that within the last four years two other Armenian civilians from borderline settlements Manvel Saribekyan and Mamikon Khojoyan were publicly humiliated, tortured in Azerbaijani custody which resulted in their deaths.

We took note with appreciation that a number of the OSCE participating states condemned and expressed their concern over this case.

We would like to recommend to those participating states which are state party to the OPCAT to closely cooperate with the Subcommittee of the Prevention of Torture.

Finally, there was a certain misconduct by an Azeri progovernmental organization. I would like to state that all impolite insults will be handled by my delegation with polite disregard. However, I think that this incident should be assessed by organizers of HDIM in order to prevent its repetition.

Thank you