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

Statement

**In Response to H.E. Sebastian Kurz, Austrian Federal Minister for European
and International Affairs
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 982th Meeting of the OSCE
Permanent Council**

January 30, 2014

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to warmly welcome H.E. Sebastian Kurz and express our gratitude for his interesting and thought provoking address.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Minister Kurz on his appointment to the post of the Austrian Federal Minister for European and International Affairs and on assuming the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The Delegation of Armenia expresses its profound gratitude to the Government of Austria for the excellent hospitality and creation of all necessary conditions for our work.

We are pleased to note that Armenia and Austria have common priorities in the Council of Europe and wish to commend the Austrian Chairmanship for ensuring continuity and consistency of activities of the Organization. Armenia, as an active member of the Council of Europe, will render its full support to Austria in promoting the objectives, values and principles of the Council of Europe and implementation of its priorities.

We would like to stress the need for further promotion of targeted and result oriented cooperation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE. These two organizations have significant potential, which has not been fully utilized. In our view their wide toolbox could be implied in combined way particularly in the third dimension of the OSCE through further promotion of human rights particularly addressing hate crimes in our common region. The strong position of Council of

Europe on deplorable cases of hate crime glorification is very important for the OSCE as well.

We welcome the joint steps undertaken so far by the Austrian Chairmanship of the Committee of Minister of the Council of Europe and the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE to further promote the cooperation between the two Organizations in the areas of common interest. I would like to welcome the initiative to hold the upcoming joint Conference “Not For Sale – Joining Forces against Trafficking in Human Beings”, which we view as an important step to coordinate activities and develop synergy in the context of combating trafficking.

Another important area of cooperation between the two organizations is the election related activities, including election observation. Our standard setting organizations should exclude setbacks in this field and carefully examine those cases when we failed to speak in one voice.

Mr. Minister,

Armenia and Austria share excellent and active bilateral relations. Recently President Fisher paid a visit to Armenia, and this year we will more deepen our cooperation during the official visit of the President of Armenia to Austria.

In conclusion, we would like to thank once again You, Mr. Minister for the address and wish You all success in Your responsible mission.

Thank You.