



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
TO THE OSCE

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STATEMENT

**On the 80th anniversary of the victory over Nazism in the Second World War
as delivered by Ambassador Andranik Hovhannisyan
at the at the 1519th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

8 May 2025

Mr. Chairperson,

The 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War stands as a powerful reminder of a watershed moment in human history.

The Armenian nation made a significant contribution to the victory over Nazism. It is worth recalling that every fifth Armenian was mobilized to the front lines. Although Armenia itself was not a battlefield, the Republic lost 14 percent of its population, a proportion commensurate with casualties on a number of territories directly invaded by the Nazis. Approximately 500,000 Armenians served in the Soviet Army. Of them, 107 were awarded the highest honor of Hero of the Soviet Union, ranking sixth among all Soviet nationalities. By the end of the war, 83 Armenian officers had achieved the rank of general, and five reached the highest military rank of Marshal and Admiral. Among them, Marshal Hovhannes Baghramyan commanded one of the fronts on the battlefield.

One of the six Armenian ethnic units, the Tamanyan Division, marched from the Caucasus Mountains and symbolically marked the victory day by performing the traditional Armenian *Kochari* folk dance at the walls of the Reichstag. This moment was captured in military chronicles for posterity.

More than 100,000 Armenians also served in the armed forces of the Allied Powers, including in the armies of France, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Armenians participated in resistance movements and guerrilla warfare across Europe. Tank columns and aircraft squadrons were established, and significant amounts of weapons and ammunition were procured through funds raised by the Armenian Church and Diaspora.

Armenia continues to honor the memory of this victory with deep reverence. Today, over 600 monuments dedicated to war participants are under state protection. We believe in this regard that the ethnically motivated revisionism of history and the destruction of monuments to anti-Nazi heroes is not merely a desecration of memory, it is an alarming signal of tolerance for the very racist ideologies against which so many gave their lives.

It is no coincidence that the generation that endured the horrors of the twentieth century also laid the foundations for the international mechanisms aimed to prevent wars and atrocity crimes. They understood, from lived experience, how far humanity can fall in the absence of a strong international system of prevention. Yet, the solemn promise of “never again” remains unfulfilled. The war crimes, blockades, ethnic cleansings continue unabashedly, especially in a time when international security arrangements and human rights mechanisms are under growing decline.

Mr. Chairperson,

Last year, the Armenian-French resistance fighter Missak Manouchian was interred, alongside his wife, in the Panthéon in Paris, eighty years after his execution by the Nazis. He became the first foreign Resistance fighter to be granted this honor.

Two hours before his execution, Manouchian wrote to his wife: “I have one profound regret, and that’s of not having made you happy. I wish for happiness for all those who will survive and taste the sweetness of the freedom and peace of tomorrow. I’m sure that the French people, and all those who fight for freedom, will know how to honor our memory with dignity.”

Mr. Chairperson,

Dear Colleagues,

I firmly believe that honoring the memory of the heroes of World War II requires a steadfast commitment to building peace, strengthening multilateral security arrangements, upholding human rights, and reinforcing the international framework for prevention.

Thank you.