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

Statement

On the Realization of the Freedom to Peaceful Assembly
delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian at the 1061st Meeting of the
OSCE Permanent Council

July 02, 2015

Mr. Chairperson,

We took note of the statements of the Delegation of Luxembourg on behalf of the EU member-states and aligned participating States and the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The content of the statements will be duly communicated to the capital.

We consider the reaction of international community, including OSCE participating States on the recent demonstrations in Yerevan as an evidence of our partners' interest in strengthening democracy in Armenia.

The Government of Armenia reiterated its commitment to democracy, fundamental freedoms and protection of human rights.

We took note that the statements of the OSCE institutions, to which the EU delegation referred, had been released ten days ago and they do not cover the current dynamic. Therefore I would like to share some information on the recent developments.

During these ten days the demonstration continued without any impediments. No any person among demonstrators has been detained and currently no one is under the custody. Here we would like to recall that the ongoing rally has been held in the very administrative center of the capital, in the vicinity of the Presidential Office and the National Assembly and is keeping closed the central avenue for traffic. Nevertheless, police demonstrates restraint and undertakes all measures to maintain law and order and at the meantime ensure exercise of the freedom of peaceful assembly. There has been good cooperation between police and demonstrators.

The demonstration has been widely covered by the national and international media.

Inquiry is being held by relevant authorities, necessary steps are being taken to address shortcomings identified by the Police itself.

The Government and the President expressed their readiness to enter into direct dialogue with the representatives of the protestors. Moreover, the President Sargsyan offered the road map of overcoming the situation which entails compensation of increase of tariffs and an audit in the "Electric networks of Armenia" Company with the participation of independent international experts, as well as representatives of

civil society, including representatives of the demonstrators themselves. The authorities will continue attempts to solve the outstanding social issues through constructive dialogue with the civil society.

Let me also refer to some OSCE housekeeping issues. We took note of the fact that while making their statements some of our partners did not refer to the spot report of the Yerevan Office. Instead there was a reference to the press release of the ODIHR Director which entailed unprecedented public calls to a participating State. We are not aware of the reason behind this exclusive attention and attachment of the ODIHR to this particular situation, which can be taken as a good practice of dealing with massive protests without compromising fundamental freedoms in the OSCE area.

In our view, transparency is essential for any partnership and if some of our partners did not see relevance to the spot reports of the Yerevan Office then we are ready to discuss usefulness of this function of the Office.

Thank You.