

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Working Session 7, Humanitarian issues and other commitments
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As delivered by

Mr. Vaheh Gevorgyan, Head of the OSCE and Conventional Arms Control Division, Arms Control and International Security Department, MFA of Armenia

Mr. Moderator,

We would like to reiterate our support to the activities OSCE Special Representative/Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

Armenia has made a considerable progress in the fight against trafficking, which was acknowledged by international community including participating states, academia and civil society. According to international assessment the Government of Armenia fully meets the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The recently adopted law "On identification and assistance to the victims of trafficking or exploitation" establishes standard procedures for the identification, support, protection, and reintegration of suspected and identified trafficking victims across national and local government bodies, NGOs, international organizations, and civil society. The law also grants trafficking victims the same rights and services as Armenian citizens, and ensures assistance is provided regardless of a victim's cooperation with law enforcement agencies. The government maintains strong cooperation with anti-trafficking NGOs and mass media and international partners.

The government had dedicated resources for victim services and provided funding to one NGO-run shelter for trafficking victims. The anti-trafficking interagency group met regularly to coordinate activities across the government. The government provided training and materials on victim identification to police investigators and border officials, as well as appropriate human rights training to employees at correctional institutions.

We will make further efforts to sustain this strong performance and we certainly look forward to the upcoming visit of the OSCE Special Representative/ Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human beings.

As far as other humanitarian commitments are concerned, we particularly value upholding humanitarian rights of the people residing in conflict areas including their displaced population.

In our view the displaced in the OSCE needs to be classified in current refugee and migratory crisis and protracted displacement. This distinction is important here because it entails different responses. Ongoing displacement requires protection while protracted displacement should be addressed through applying possible durable solutions .They need to be addressed in different frameworks as well.

Let me first refer to the current refugee and migratory crisis.

Armenia has hosted more than 20.000 persons from Syria, making our country the third largest recipient of Syrian refugees in Europe on per capita basis.

Armenia has taken a generous approach in offering a variety of protection options by way of accelerated asylum procedures, granting of residence permits or facilitated naturalization. State

support in developing of the businesses, durable housing, necessary free of charge medical assistance and emergency help, providing scholarships at the Universities constitute another dimension of the assistance to the people displaced by the war in Syria. Armenia will continue to provide assistance to the refugees on all these dimensions.

It is more than 25 years Armenia has been addressing protracted displacement issue of refugees coming from Azerbaijan. Then about 400 hundred refugees arrived to Armenia amid very difficult circumstances of war.

Armenia provided the only visible option of durable solution and that was a local integration. As far as the prospects of return are concerned we understand that return of all refugees could be visible within the resolution of protracted conflict. The use of force in the context of protracted conflict does not promote but hinders the conflict resolution with all its consequences.

Lastly, I would like to react on the statement made by the Azerbaijani delegation particularly to its assessment on difficult conditions of 400 internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan. Armenia had received more refugees per capita than Azerbaijan and apparently lacked the oil revenues of that country. However, Armenia did not build camps for refugees and tried to create all conditions for their integration. In our view, human rights of displaced persons should prevail over political considerations.

Thank you.