



STATEMENT

**In Response to the Address by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,
H.E. George Tsereteli**

**as delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian, Permanent Representative of Armenia, at
the 1197th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
October 11, 2018**

Mr. Chair,

We warmly welcome President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly George Tsereteli back to the Permanent Council.

We thank President Tsereteli for his address which raises important questions OSCE region and our Organization are facing today.

We appreciate your reference to the centenary of end of the First World War. Our duty to remember all victims of violence including genocide perpetrated in the context of that disastrous war should be certainly strengthened. It is also important to recall that international multilateral system had been an outcome of peace, that came after the war, enshrined in principles of international law including the right of people to self-determination. This is not accidental that this year number of participating states celebrate centenary of their independence.

We agree that after a century respect for human rights and multilateralism are indispensable part of peace and security.

In 2018 people of Armenia showed that negative trends on human rights in our region can be reversed. The peaceful democratic transition demonstrated will and maturity of the Armenian society to embrace good governance, democracy and human rights not as merely international commitments but as homegrown domestic agenda of development.

The ongoing transition in Armenia opens up new avenues of cooperation with the OSCE and in this regard, we are grateful for your recent visit, which was mainly concentrated on the democratic change in Armenia.

Armenia looks forward to cooperation with the OSCE PA on wide range of issues including elections.

Mr. President,

We certainly agree with the assessment that OSCE could have been better presented on the ground in the South Caucasus. As a participating state who hosted an OSCE full-fledged mission for 17 years and who strongly objected the closure of that Office, we stand ready to consider any proposal, which would ensure OSCE engagement on the ground in systematic and sustainable manner. Armenia Cooperation Programme is an important undertaking in this regard.

Armenia has always advocated stronger OSCE presence in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict area as well. When it comes to the involvement of the OSCE PA in the conflict related issues, particularly through Special Representative on South Caucasus, we would like to underline the following.

The former Special Representative Mr. Kristian Vigenin in his concluding report identified some essential impediments which do not allow to undertake any substantive performance for this mandate. Inability to freedom and full access to contacts and traveling in conflict areas has been recognized as one of them. We agree with this assessment. If any facilitator or mediator is supposed to obtain permission of one party to the conflict for dealing with another party to the conflict then he or she is facing unsurmountable situation.

Without addressing this constrain, without having unimpeded access to conflict areas and representatives of the population of conflict areas the role of special representative will remain ceremonial.

Armenia has always valued the role of parliamentarians in building environment conducive to peace for Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The 1994 Bishkek Protocol by which parliamentarians of all parties to conflict call on their governments to end hostilities and establish ceasefire is a good case in point. We also appreciate 2018 Berlin declaration by which the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly call on the parties to take additional steps to reduce tensions on the Line of Contact.

In conclusion, let me again highlight the readiness of Armenia to strongly cooperate with the OSCE PA in implementing OSCE commitments and wish you, Mr. President, and your able team here in Vienna every success in your activities.

Thank you.