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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT

**in response to Ambassador Tuula Yrjölä,
Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre
delivered by Ambassador Armen Papikyan
at the 1336th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

23 September, 2021

Madame Chairperson,

The Delegation of Armenia welcomes the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), Ambassador Tuula Yrjölä and thanks her for the comprehensive report to the Permanent Council.

The CPC is one of the central and key structures of the OSCE. We have repeatedly underlined the important role the CPC should play in terms of conflict prevention and management, in particular in view of its early warning and early action competences. The success and/or failure of the OSCE in preventing a conflict or crisis situation depends on the performance of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre as well. The Delegation of Armenia staunchly supports the conflict prevention function of this Organization and therefore wishes to see a viable, efficient and active CPC - a structure that can adapt to the rapidly changing security environment in the OSCE region and beyond. This requires, first of all, an honest and self-critical assessment of the current state of affairs. It is in this context that the statements of my delegation should be taken - not just as a criticism of the CPC, but rather as statements pointing to deficiencies and shortcomings that should be discussed and analysed collectively if we, the participating States, are honest in our desire to enhance the CPC's capacity for responding to emerging and existing challenges.

Madame Director,

The concerns that my delegation raised exactly one year ago are still valid today. Unfortunately, we have seen the inability of the CPC to deliver on its mandate neither before nor during the war of aggression unleashed by two OSCE participating States in an attempt to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by force. This was a purely in-house situation, which the CPC failed to address, and this clearly demonstrates the urgent need to look into the root causes of such fundamental failure, to understand what have prevented the CPC from properly delivering on its mandate, including conducting a professional assessment of the situation in its “backyard”, activating its early warning and early action mechanisms, etc. Let me be clear, here, I am not talking about the settlement of the conflict, but about clear signals of an evolving crisis.

We encourage the CPC to continue providing necessary support and assistance to the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group to effectively carry out their mandated activities, particularly in line with the latter’s statement of 13 April, 2021. Likewise, we invite the CPC to continue to extend all necessary support to the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict should be resolved based on the principles clearly stipulated in the number of statements issued by the Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, namely the principles of non-use of force, territorial integrity and equal rights and self-determination of people. Only a negotiated settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can pave the way to lasting peace and stability in the region.

Madam Chairperson,

The CPC Situation Room is an important early warning and situational awareness tool, and therefore, continues to attract our attention. We note that the SitRoom monitors the mainstream and social media on a 24/7 basis, and this is just a small part of the whole exercise. An in-depth assessment and analysis of dangerous trends and developments in the OSCE area is also needed, which should serve as a call to action

for the OSCE Secretary General and the Chairperson-in-Office on possible responses and preventive measures.

We acknowledge the efforts of the CPC to find ways in which its capabilities could be developed to meet the expectations of the participating States. These are all encouraging signals that need to be translated into tangible results.

In this regard, we also note with interest the information on the new concept of the Situation Room. This is a long-overdue but promising initiative that gives hope for cautious optimism about the future of the CPC. My delegation would appreciate more information on this concept.

Likewise, we believe that the OSCE executive structures in general and the CPC in particular should be extremely vigilant and cautious when considering any possible activity that could directly or indirectly undermine OSCE principles and commitments.

We also take note of your concerns about the financial constraints faced by the CPC. The concept of a zero nominal growth budget has now become a salient feature of consensus in the OSCE. In a time of pandemic and growing uncertainty, a strong indication of the added value of respective structures of this Organization is needed to help the participating States convince their capitals of the need for increased funding.

In the end, I would like to once again thank you, distinguished Ambassador Tuula Yrjölä, for your presentation and wish you every success in your future endeavours.

I thank you.