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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT

In Response to Ambassador Vuk Žugić, Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

as delivered by Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Permanent Representative of Armenia at the 1220th Meeting of the Permanent Council

March 14, 2019

Mr. Chair,

We would like to welcome and thank Ambassador Vuk Žugić for outlining activities and plans of his Office in 2019 at the Permanent Council.

The Delegation of Armenia values the work of the Office of the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities as the leading executive structure in promoting the implementation of the OSCE commitments related to the economic and environmental dimension of security.

Throughout years the OCEEA has accumulated important expertise in dealing with environmental and economic issues which are essential in safeguarding security. We believe that the strong security link should be prerequisite of the activities of the Office including in ExB projects.

We agree with Ambassador Žugić that there are number of best practices and experiences with regard to the contribution of second dimension activities that have enabled dialogue, prevented and forestall tensions, and strengthened trust, including in conflict and crisis situations. We stand ready to cooperate with the Office and all interested parties in this regard.

We understand that pursuit of conflict related issues in the second dimension requires inclusive framework and consent of all relevant sides involved in conflicts. Therefore, we call on the Office to take into account interests and sensitivities of all relevant participating states in designing and implementing projects including in ExB framework which may have conflict related context including in area of connectivity and energy.

We support the focus of the OCEEA on good governance and combating corruption. We appreciate strong cooperation of the OCEEA with the Special Representative of the Chairmanship-in-Office on Combating Corruption, Professor Paola Severino which has already resulted in some country specific projects. The ExB project on Strengthening anti-corruption reform in Armenia is a good case in point and we look forward to its speedy implementation.

Economic empowerment of women at local and regional levels is another important field of our cooperation. We commend active engagement of the OCEEA in implementation of the project on economic empowerment of women in Syunik region and other regions of Armenia

As environmental hazards are predominately of transboundary nature, the regional approach could be well-suited to address them. We are ready to continue our cooperation in disaster risk reduction in both regional or bilateral frameworks.

Armenia looks forward to the continued cooperation with the OCEEA through either Armenia Cooperation Program or through direct ExB projects. We would welcome strong engagement of the OCEEA with Aarhus centers which are present almost in all provinces of Armenia

Last but not least, we appreciate that OCEEA will sustain its engagement within ENVSEC initiative which provides a valuable platform of cooperation with other key international players.

In conclusion, we would like to wish every success to the Coordinator and pledge our continued support.

Thank you.