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

ENGLISH only

Statement

On the 72nd Anniversary of the End of the Second World War and Liberation of Shushi

delivered by the Delegation of Armenia at the 1144th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

May 04, 2017

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to share some remarks in our national capacity in regard to the commemoration of the 71st Anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe.

This anniversary is important for all the OSCE participating States along with other remembrance dates. The Victory Day is a good opportunity to pay tribute to all those who through their enormous sacrifices eventually won the peace and dignity for future generations. The Armenian people alongside with the peoples of the Soviet Union and other allied nations made their contribution to the victory of humanity.

600 thousand Armenians participated in the war and almost half of them did not return from the battlefields and concentration camps. Aside from Great Patriotic War, Armenians played an important role in resistance and liberation movement in Europe particularly in France.

In reference to the statement of the Azerbaijani Delegation, we would like to state that indeed May 9 marks an important and symbolic milestone in the history of the people of Artsakh, namely 25th anniversary of liberation of its ancient capital.

The indigenous Armenian population of Shushi was massacred by Azerbaijani occupying forces in 1920, which paved way for subsequent 70-year long occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In 1991 and 1992 Shushi was turned into a military stronghold of the Azerbaijani occupation army, from where the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh was constantly and indiscriminately shelled, causing significant casualties of the civilian population. Therefore, liberation of Shushi in May 9, 1992 was extremely important for ensuring very survival of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh

Since its liberation the city of Shushi is continuously developing. The authorities of Artsakh are conducting programmes of preservation of history and culture of the city. Among recent positive developments is programme of renovation of the Shia mosque of Shushi with involvement of specialists from Muslim countries, which certainly should be

seen as a good practice of promoting tolerance and respect towards history, religion and culture in Artsakh.

Azerbaijani Delegation made number of other baseless allegations, which we will not comment, since our position in this regard is well known. However, there was one new allegation in the statement, namely reference to Garegin Nzhdeh.

Garegin Nzhdeh is the national hero of Armenia, whose resistance movement in Armenian province of Zangezur back in the beginning of 20th century saved the Armenian population of Zangezur from massacres by Azerbaijani forces.

Azerbaijani Delegation is very skilled in falsification of history. If Azerbaijan is really interested in the topic of collaborationism with Nazi Germany, we would expect the Azerbaijani Delegation to recall war crimes of Azerbaijani legion and not to be guided by conflict perceptions.

Thank you.