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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

Statement

**in response to the Reports by the three Personal Representatives
of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination
as delivered by the Delegation of Armenia
at the 1390th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

22 September 2022

Mr. Chairman,

We took note of the reports presented by the three Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, Prof. Regina Polak, Rabbi Andrew Baker and Ambassador Ismail Hakki Musa. As this is the first appearance of Ambassador Hakki Musa at the Permanent Council, let me welcome him and express hope that his tenure and future work will help address all manifestations of hatred, intolerance and discrimination throughout the OSCE area of responsibility, in a comprehensive manner and without any distinction, political or geographical considerations or double standards.

That being said, I have to once again express my Delegation's disappointment with the reports of the three Personal Representatives. It is especially discouraging that the reports do not say a single word about manifestations of extreme hatred, intolerance and discrimination, including on religious, ethnic and other grounds, in our region, which unfortunately continues to suffer from these phenomena ultimately leading to new instances of aggression and use of force, violence and loss of life. And the issue here concerns not only the proper implementation of the Personal Representatives' mandate or OSCE commitments, but also about the moral responsibility. Equally, it is not a matter of the lack or scarcity of relevant information.

Distinguished Representatives,

In our previous statements, we have drawn attention to the numerous facts and cases of extreme manifestations of intolerance and discrimination, such as hate speech, hate crimes, extrajudicial killings, torture and other ill-treatment, desecration of dead bodies, as well as destruction of Armenian historical and religious heritage, places of worship and cemeteries, expropriation of churches and many other crimes committed

against Armenians. We have repeatedly expressed the hope that these systematic state-sponsored practices of hatred and intolerance against Armenians will receive due attention and will be reflected in your reports. Unfortunately, this is again not the case, - and we view this as another missed opportunity and a manifestation of selective approach or double standards. We simply do not understand the reasons for such an indifference to the issues that we raise.

It is extremely deplorable that such heinous hate crimes as mutilation, desecration and dismemberment of the bodies of fallen soldiers, including women who defended their homeland, did not receive your attention.

Moreover, I draw your attention to the fact that a sticker pack with cruel and bloody images and photographs of killed Armenian soldiers has been created in the Azerbaijani segment of social networks in order to use them for communication in Telegram. This pack, consisting of 119 pieces, was downloaded 20 thousand times in 5 days. This speaks volume about the state of affairs in that society where state-sponsored terror and hatred are used as effective tools for manipulation of collective and individual mentality/mindset and perceptions.

I also draw your attention to the fact that in the Concluding observations on the combined tenth to twelfth reports of Azerbaijan, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed deep concern about severe and grave human rights violations committed by the Azerbaijani military forces during and after the 2020 war of aggression against prisoners of war and other protected persons of Armenian ethnic or national origin, including extrajudicial killings, torture and other ill-treatment, incitement to racial hatred and the propagation of racist stereotypes against ethnic Armenians on social media platforms, including by public figures and government officials (Para. 4(c)), and recommended the Azerbaijani authorities to adopt measures to monitor and combat hate speech, incitement and promotion of racial hatred and discrimination including on the Internet and social media as well as by its officials and public institutions targeted at persons of Armenian ethnic or national origin (Para. 5(d)). I still hope that these facts will be duly taken into account and will be reflected in the reports of the distinguished Personal Representatives.

This is especially important in terms of early warning and prevention of new such violations in the face of the likelihood of a new violent war in the region.

In closing, let me once again thank you for your appearance at the Permanent Council.

Thank you.