

**The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) of OSCE/ODIHR 2016,****28 September, Warsaw, Poland****Presented by: Ms. Nvard Khachatryan****Statement on behalf of the Network of Women's Resource Centres in Armenia**

There have been genuine efforts to increase women's political participation in Armenia, but their role in decision-making positions remains critically low.

Women in parliament comprise less than 11 per cent, despite of the previously used 20 per cent minimum quota in party electoral lists. The new Electoral Code adopted in 2016 raised the minimum quotas to 25 per cent only for 2017 parliamentary elections. At the regional level Armenia has only ever had one women governor. At the local level, women comprise just over 9 per cent of community councils. Out of all rural communities, only 2 per cent are led by women, while 49 cities, including Yerevan, have never had women mayors.

In addition, the country is undergoing consolidation reforms and small municipalities are being merged. Elections in the newly merged communities reveal that this creates additional challenges for women to be elected and the number of women involved in local self-government is significantly decreasing.

In order to address the mentioned issues and increase women's representation in decision making positions, the network of Women's Resource Centers in Armenia, operating in the regions of the country, calls on all actors to:

- Develop and adopt relevant gender equality policies considering country's international commitments in the field;
- Strengthen special measures to ensure equal participation;
- Create favourable conditions for women's political participation in promoting women independent candidates, in particular in the context of ongoing consolidation reforms.

Thank you for your attention.