



Statement

On the Early Parliamentary Elections in Armenia

ENGLISH only

**as delivered by Mr. Vahe Gevorgyan, Deputy Permanent Representative of Armenia at
the 1209th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
December 13, 2018**

Mr. Chair,

We would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the Early Parliamentary Elections, which took place in Armenia on December 9, 2018.

According to the results announced by the Central Electoral Commission of Armenia, three out of eleven contestants: My Step Alliance, Prosperous Armenia and Bright Armenia Parties entered the new Parliament with My Step Alliance holding clear majority.

At the outset, it should be recalled that the context of these elections were shaped by the April-May events in Armenia on which my delegation provided information to the Permanent Council.

The new Government, which assumed power as a result of the peaceful and non-violent Revolution declared holding the Early Parliamentary Elections as one of its main priorities. They were supposed not only to accomplish the political transition but also establish public trust towards democratic election and its outcome.

The Government of Armenia made important modifications in the legislation aimed at eliminating illegal practices, which had undermined public trust towards elections, including vote buying. Though the Governmental package of electoral reforms fell short to secure qualified majority in the Parliament, strong political will, implementation of existing Electoral Code in good faith and awareness raising among all stakeholders, full respect of fundamental freedoms including freedom of expression, equal opportunities provided to all contestants created conducive environment for free and fair elections.

The international feedback including the preliminary findings and conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission has been encouraging. We are pleased to note that these elections provided an objective reality, which was captured by number of observation missions in converging not diverging manner without any political or geopolitical contexts.

All observation missions underlined the public trust towards elections. This is an important achievement in upholding Armenia's international commitments. Yet what is even more important that this assessment belongs to the people of Armenia. This public trust cannot be taken for granted, as it reflects consensus and ownership of the Armenian society over and of democracy, rule of law and human rights. It reflects strong desire of the people of Armenia to establish and live in a society of shared values and confidence.

The Early Parliamentary Elections have established new standards of democracy, rule of law and human rights in Armenia. These standards need to be further upheld and developed. Armenia looks forward to further cooperation with the OSCE institutions particularly ODIHR in this regard.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all our international partners, including ODIHR, OSCE PA and participating states who seconded observers to election observation for their assistance and cooperation.

Thank you