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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
TO THE OSCE

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STATEMENT
in response to the address by the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights,
delivered by Ambassador Andranik Hovhannisyan
at the 1583rd meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, 29 October 2026

Mr. Chair,

Armenia warmly welcomes Director Maria Telalian back to the Permanent Council and thanks her for her comprehensive report.

At a time of mounting challenges to human rights and fundamental freedoms and against the backdrop of an extremely difficult geopolitical environment, ODIHR's mandate remains as critical as ever. In this context, we concur with the Director's assessment that security depends on accountable institutions, the rule of law, inclusive societies and respect for human dignity.

Mr. Chair,

Armenia values its long-standing and multifaceted co-operation with ODIHR across a broad range of areas, such as strengthening Armenia's capacities in gender equality in political life, disability inclusion and regulation of administrative justice. These programmes reflect our firm commitment to democratic reform and demonstrate the value of ODIHR's practical, demand-driven assistance.

Among the many important activities carried out by ODIHR, we would like to highlight its efforts to combat hate crimes. History has repeatedly shown that mass violence is often preceded or accompanied by hate speech that fuels hostility and prejudice against ethnic, religious or racial groups and may be used to condone or justify violence against them. ODIHR's hate crime data collection and reporting, together with its capacity to identify such early warning signals, are essential for addressing risks before they escalate.

We would also like to emphasize ODIHR's contribution to addressing religious intolerance, including anti-Christian narratives. Across the OSCE area, we continue to witness attacks on places of worship, as well as the destruction and desecration of religious and cultural heritage and

the distortion of its identity. Anti-Christian hatred, Antisemitism and Islamophobia have no place in any democratic society.

Mr. Chair,

We particularly appreciate ODIHR's unique role in election observation, which remains one of the most visible and valuable instruments of the OSCE's human dimension. Armenia's own experience this year shows the value of this work. We once again express our appreciation to ODIHR and its partner organizations for observing the parliamentary elections held in Armenia on 7 June.

We note with satisfaction the preliminary findings of the international election observation mission, which concluded that Armenian voters were given a genuine choice in a professionally managed process and a vibrant, pluralistic political environment. Armenia remains committed to carefully considering the recommendations with a view to further improving our electoral processes and strengthening public trust.

These elections also illustrated the current challenges that democracies face across the OSCE area. As the observers noted, citizens of Armenia voted against the backdrop of unprecedented foreign interference and pressure. Disinformation campaigns, foreign information manipulation, cyber threats and other hybrid activities sought to influence public opinion, polarize society and erode confidence in democratic institutions. Such threats are not limited to one country. They target the very foundation of free democratic choice. We therefore encourage ODIHR to further develop its expertise in assessing and addressing such malign activities.

Mr. Chair,

We appreciate ODIHR's work in supporting the three Supplementary Human Dimension Meetings held this year, as well as the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference organized by the Swiss Chairpersonship. These meetings remain valuable platforms for open dialogue among participating States, civil society and international partners.

At the same time, we remain concerned by attempts to misuse these platforms by some non-genuine organizations acting in bad faith, particularly those that openly condone violence. Protecting the integrity of these meetings is essential to preserving the space for genuine civil society.

Mr. Chair,

Turning to the 2027 Unified Budget, Armenia acknowledges the importance of preserving ODIHR's institutional capacity and expertise, which enable it to deliver on its mandate, respond to the requests of participating States and carry out its assessments. We will engage constructively in the upcoming budget discussions with this in mind.

In conclusion, Armenia reiterates its strong support for the ODIHR's mandate and stands ready to continue our close and constructive co-operation in promoting democratic institutions, human rights and the rule of law throughout the OSCE area.

Thank you.