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PERMANENT MISSION OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF  
ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

## Statement

**As delivered by the Delegation of Armenia  
at the 1076<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation  
Security Dialogue on “Humanitarian Demining – scope, challenges and the way  
forward”**

*8 May 2024*

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to thank the distinguished panelists for their informative presentations and contributions. And I thank Ambassador Tomaž Lovrenčič for reflecting on Armenia's cooperation, which we greatly value.

The issue of reducing the risk of Explosive Remnants of War has always been high on the agenda of the Armenian government and an area of cooperation with our international partners, against the backdrop of the large-scale aggressions against Armenia's sovereign territories, accompanied by indiscriminate targeting of residential areas.

The Government of the Republic of Armenia established the Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise (CHDE) in 2011 to coordinate mine action activities in our country.

Since its establishment, the Center has been engaged in demining activities in the territories affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war, contributing to improving civilian safety and security, and promoting economic activity, which is essential for the sustainable development of communities.

In parallel to the mine and explosive ordnance clearance activities, the Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise also conducts Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) aimed at raising awareness of the population through education on mine and explosive ordnance risks and promoting safer behavior. During the last year, the Center in collaboration with civil society organizations conducted awareness raising events for around 14 000 citizens and schoolchildren.

The Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise also organizes training courses to further improve deminers' professional knowledge and skills, as well as to recruit new professionals, including with special training programs designated for women deminers.

Dear colleagues,

Addressing the challenges of the impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination is particularly critical in conflict-affected countries and conflict zones.

During recent years, the situation in our region has particularly exacerbated after the 44-day war of aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020 and the war of aggression in 2022 against the sovereign territories of Armenia, which greatly affected the scale and type of contamination. Indiscriminate targeting of residential areas and aerial and missile attacks on many civilian infrastructures have caused new contamination of areas, including with cluster munitions.

As of the end of December 2023, there are still 11 confirmed and 25 suspected hazardous areas contaminated with mines and explosive ordinances in the Republic of Armenia, with a total surface area of more than 42 000 square kilometers. Gegharkunik and Syunik provinces of the Republic of Armenia are the regions with the highest level of explosive ordnance contamination.

Mr. Chair,

Dear colleagues,

Armenia has always been supportive of the efforts to address the threats posed by landmines and other Explosive Remnants of War, and has engaged in good faith to effectively counter this threat.

In the meantime, it is our firm conviction that the issue of landmines and other explosive ordinances should in no way be abused for political manipulations, nor can they be exploited as a pretext for imposing inhumane sufferings, creating humanitarian crises, and launching armed aggressions. Similarly, international assistance mechanisms should not be misused with the ultimate goal of justifying and legitimizing the results of the massive use of force and ethnic cleansing.

To this end, we reaffirm that we should avoid situations where this organization could be engaged in conflict-related projects without the clear consent of all the parties concerned. We should exclude the possibility that OSCE projects or programs are misused to justify violations of the Helsinki Final Act provisions.

I thank you.