



**ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՊԱՏՎԻՐԱԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ**  
**DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**  
**ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

**Statement of the Delegation of Armenia**  
**Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting**  
**Freedom of Movement and Human Contacts**  
**April 25-26, 2013**

Mr. Moderator,

We would like to thank the Ukrainian Chairmanship for prioritizing freedom of movement which is reflected in convening this supplementary human dimension meeting. We are also grateful to the distinguished speakers for shaping up discussions on this important topic.

Freedom of movement is a universal human right which is fully enshrined in all major human rights instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human rights. Yet for the OSCE freedom of movement has its specific standing as a founding right which became a pillar of building a regional organization free of separation walls and closed borders.

Throughout time the patterns of addressing this issue underwent significant changes. Yet freedom of movement remains at the core as it had been initially conceived as an important individual human right whose enjoyment builds trust and friendly relations among peoples. Hence the significance of ensuring freedom of movement in the OSCE applies both to persons and peoples.

Armenia is committed to developing human contacts and ensuring greater respect and application of freedom of movement in the whole OSCE region. With this in mind, in January this year the Armenian Government unilaterally exempted visa requirements for the citizens of 31 participating states. Add to this another 11 participating states with whom Armenia has been maintaining visa free regime. We are pleased to state that our country is accessible for visa free travel for the citizens of great majority of the participating states.

In our view, continued efforts towards ensuring stronger human contacts serves to our overall objective of building security community free of dividing lines and closed borders.

While being one of the founding rights, freedom of the movement is by far the most updated one. Apparently there are certain stumbling blocks towards full enjoyment of this right elsewhere in the OSCE.

As a result of unilateral coercive measures there are still closed borders which infringe the right of freedom of movement. There are certain restrictive criteria being applied in some participating states which do not comply with the international law such as the denial of entrance based on the ethnicity regardless of his or her citizenship. We are particularly concerned that persons presumably bearing Armenian surnames denied the entrance to Azerbaijan. These discriminatory practices should be clearly addressed in our work towards updating our commitments with regard to the freedom of movement.

Furthermore, there are impediments of realization of this right by the population living on certain areas of the OSCE. In our view, this universal right should be accessible for everyone irrespective of the legal status of the territories where population reside as it is stipulated in the article 2 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this regard, attempts to restrict freedom of movement and human contacts with the population of Nagorno-Karabakh are a clear violation of international law.

Initially designed as tool for overcoming divisions, the realization of the right to freedom of movement can nowadays establish a cooperative framework and be used as important confidence building measure.

Thank you.