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PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

Statement

**in response to the report of Ms. Teresa Ribeiro,
OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
as delivered by Ambassador Armen Papikyan
at the 1478th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

13 June 2024

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Armenia warmly welcomes Ms. Teresa Ribeiro back to the Permanent Council and thanks her for the comprehensive report.

The independence of the media is an absolute priority for the Government of Armenia. Armenia has been consistently promoting freedom of the media and has shown continual improvement in its performance on media freedom. According to the 2023 World Press Freedom Index, Armenia has further improved its ranking, rising from 51st to 43rd position among 180 countries.

Madame Representative,

We fully concur with you that in the current security environment, investing in resilience against information manipulation is crucial. With this understanding Armenia has included media literacy as a key competency in state education standards and the teacher certification process to address the challenges of the digital age. Since 2017 Armenia has been organizing Media Literacy Weeks in schools. However, the landscape of media literacy and information integrity in the OSCE region remains uneven. In the context of increased hybrid threats that Armenia has been facing during the recent years we also note the

attempts of foreign interference through information manipulation and distortion. While some countries are making significant strides to enhance media freedom and literacy other states exploit the media to propagate hatred and violence, and rather than combating disinformation, they actively disseminate it to incite aggression against other states. It is well known from history of mass atrocities that perpetrators try to limit information flow in order to hide their planned aggressions and crimes.

In this vein, Distinguished Representative, we fully concur with you that there can be no security without media freedom. We would also add that the media freedom situation cannot be seen detached from the political and security realities. Restrictions and obstructions to media freedom do not happen in a vacuum. Therefore, it is self-evident that the countries with the worst record on freedom of expression and democracy resort to and justify the use of force in the OSCE region. It is well known that preparation for war and aggressions entails silencing the independent voices and establishing total control over the mass media. In this regard the assault on freedom of media should be taken as an early warning sign with security implications.

In closing we reiterate the firm resolve of the Armenian authorities to further protect freedom of expression. On a final note, as your tenure as OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media comes to the end we would like to thank you for the fruitful cooperation and wish you every success in all your future endeavors.

Thank you.