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PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT

**in response to the report by the
OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
as delivered by the Delegation of Armenia
at the 1482nd meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

11 July 2024

Madame Chair,

The Delegation of Armenia warmly welcomes the High Commissioner Kairat Abdrakhmanov back to the Permanent Council and thanks him for the comprehensive report.

We concur with you, High Commissioner, that sustainable peace and security in the OSCE area rests on our ability and willingness to work together, recognize and respect differences and rebuild trust. We will also add that peace is not sustainable without protection and promotion of human rights, including human rights of national minorities.

Armenia as a strong supporter of the universality of human rights promotes minority rights at a national level. Protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, preservation of their language and cultural heritage are among the priorities of Armenia. The Government of Armenia is convinced that political, social, cultural and economic participation is key to empowering national minorities and promoting their inclusive integration into society.

In line with this approach, four seats in the National Assembly of Armenia are assigned to four major national minorities - Yazidis, Russians, Assyrians and Kurds. Particular attention is paid to the access to minority language education in schools. It should be recalled that Yazidis are the largest minority group in Armenia, and in 2019 the world's largest temple of this ancient people was inaugurated in Armenia.

High Commissioner,

We concur with you that it is imperative that all OSCE participating States effectively address hate crimes and hate speech and promote peace and understanding among diverse communities. We continue to witness hate speech, intolerance, glorification of hate crime and promotion of crimes in the political discourse of some states. Armenia is deeply concerned that national, as well as religious and ethnic groups are increasingly becoming targets of hate speech, violence and atrocities by authoritarian regimes that have an abysmal human rights record, where the majority rights are also systematically suppressed and violated. Authoritarian regimes often employ hate speech and violence as tools to dehumanize specific groups. This strategy diverts attention from the authoritarian regime's broader human rights abuses.

Therefore, we believe that Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations should be further developed with a view to taking more robust action against the backdrop of continuous unlawful suppression and violation of the rights of national or ethnic minorities by some states.

On a final note, as your tenure as OSCE High Commissioner on national minorities comes to the end we would like to thank you and wish you every success in all your future endeavors.

I thank you.