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

**Statement**  
**in response to the address by**  
**H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé**  
**Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Spain**  
**delivered by Ambassador Ashot Hovakimian**  
**at the 790<sup>th</sup> (Special) Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**  
**19 January 2010**

Mr. Chairman,

Please allow me to extend a warm welcome to H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Spain, and to thank him for the interesting and comprehensive statement. I am particularly pleased to welcome our former Chairman-in-Office, who personally contributed a lot to the activities of our organisation. So welcome back, Your Excellency.

It became a tradition that the country holding the EU presidency from the very beginning of its tenure is addressing the Permanent Council of this. This comes to confirm that the EU and the OSCE have become exceedingly close and interconnected – two organizations performing more or less in the same region, complementing each other, sharing objectives, values and visions.

Mr. Chairman,

The relations with the European Union are one of the main priorities of Armenia's foreign policy agenda. The political dialogue with the EU has intensified recently and with the launch of Eastern Partnership we have got new opportunities for enhanced cooperation. We are hopeful that the Eastern Partnership should also become a consolidating force for the cooperation among the Eastern Partners themselves. Regretfully, this position is not shared by all the partner countries. The first round of Eastern Partnership platform meetings was marked by the inability of a certain country to engage itself into constructive and cooperative dialogue in line with the objectives of the Partnership. This rejectionist policy towards multilateral regional initiatives proposed by the EU is regrettable and it requires proper and clear reaction on part of the EU. We hope that during the Spanish Presidency of the EU a priority attention will be devoted to the Eastern Partnership and to the cooperation initiatives between the EU and Partner countries.

An important new development in relations between Armenia and the EU is the establishment of the EU Advisory group in Armenia since last March. A team of EU experts is assisting various government institutions in the implementation of the reforms in legislative, executive and judiciary in line with the European standards.

We have also stepped up our engagement in the field of Human Rights with the EU, with the launching of the Human Rights Dialogue. On 9 December 2009 the first Human Rights Dialogue between Armenia and the European Union took place in Yerevan in an open and constructive atmosphere, with an exchange on a wide range of issues of mutual interest and concern, as well as discussions on possibilities for concrete cooperation in the field of human rights.

An issue of high importance for us is the visa facilitation process with the EU countries. Promotion of people-to-people contacts is the best way to establish and develop real partnership among the EU member states and the partner countries, and we think that substantial changes should occur in this direction.

We welcome the EU position on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and its balanced approach in the spirit of the Athens Ministerial Statement. The Madrid document, based on the principles of international law, including the right of the people to self-determination, could be a good platform for the negotiations in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group.

At the end let me say the following. While we appreciate the level of cooperation with the EU Presidency here in the OSCE, yet we believe that there is a need for further streamlining that cooperation and we are looking forward to working with the Spanish delegation.

Let me conclude by once again thanking you, Your Excellency, for your statement and wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.