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

Statement

**In Response to Secretary General Thomas Greminger
delivered by Permanent Delegation of Armenia at the 1156th Meeting of the OSCE
Permanent Council
August 31, 2017**

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to thank the Secretary General, Mr. Thomas Greminger for his inaugural address. We took very careful note of your vision, which is certainly shaped by first-hand experience in leading the organization in its current context.

It is in time of change, be it crisis or breakthrough that the value of an international political organization is determined. The past record, including the most recent one, shows that the OSCE is opt for challenge once there is a genuine desire to set up and fulfill an agenda of co-operation and change. This mood has been certainly observed by us in your inaugural address.

In our view, the OSCE and its capacities both at the headquarters and the field should provide avenues for dialogue and co-operation and should not become hostage of conflict perceptions of participating States.

The closure of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, which occurred despite strong support of the host country, the Chairmanship, Secretariat and almost all participating States is the most vivid example of destructive approaches emanating from conflict perceptions and today, as we hold this important discussion another event is taking place in Yerevan: the OSCE flag-lowering ceremony, which declares the discontinuation of the activities of the OSCE Office in Yerevan. This sad development indicates the lowest point of co-operation in the Organization, which should be certainly overcome by all those who supported the OSCE Office in Yerevan and OSCE field presences in general.

Armenia is looking forward to closely co-operating with the Secretary General to ensure continued OSCE engagement, which should be effective and efficient in line with the programmatic activities of the OSCE Yerevan Office

Furthermore, Armenia firmly believes that the OSCE presence in conflict areas is essential. The OSCE has already accumulated exceptional expertise and knowledge in dealing with conflict situations including monitoring and verification on the ground. The need of

expansion of OSCE capacities on the ground is an important part of conflict resolution efforts, and in this regard Armenia strongly supports the expansion of the monitoring capacities of the PRCiO in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict area and establishment of an OSCE investigative mechanism into ceasefire violations, and we look forward to register tangible results here.

Armenia has been supportive of development of the OSCE capabilities on conflict cycle with an understanding that they should not duplicate and interfere with the work of agreed formats. We will be further guided by this position.

In conclusion, we would like to wish you, Mr. Secretary General, every success in leading the Organization amid the current and evolving challenges and we pledge our full support.

Thank you.