

**OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum 1<sup>st</sup> Preparatory Meeting  
Vienna, 14-15 February 2022**

**Opening Statement by the Delegation of Armenia**

I would like to thank Polish Chairmanship and the OSCE Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities and their teams for convening the first Preparatory Meeting of the Economic and Environmental Forum. Our thanks go to the distinguished speakers for shaping the framework of our discussions.

We support the focus of this year's Forum on promoting security and stability in the OSCE area through sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, the impact of good governance and anti-corruption is very pertinent topic. The chosen topics provide an opportunity to look at the traditional areas of economic-environmental dimension and incorporate new approaches in our work against the backdrop of COVID 19 pandemic.

Mr. Chair,

There is a clear consensus in the Armenian society on good governance, fight against corruption and promotion of human rights, which create favourable conditions for the Government to advance economic development.

Combatting corruption remains a priority for the Government of Armenia. Tirana Ministerial decision on combating corruption reconfirmed the risks posed by corruption to international security and stability recommitting OSCE participating States to prevent and combat corruption at international and national levels. Infamous corrupt practices by some states in international organizations is a case in point. We strongly believe that OSCE is well positioned to address this challenge and prevent use of corruption in international organizations as a foreign policy tool to advance national agendas. Unless these threats are addressed they could fuel growing mistrust in institutions and turning back the clock on years of progress.

Alongside with combating corruption, promoting good governance is important prerequisite for realization of economic and social rights and the **right of peoples to development** in the entire OSCE area.

Mr. Chair,

Unfortunately, COVID- 19 crisis is far from being over. As we have all witnessed the COVID-19 pandemic is not merely a health crisis but also humanitarian and development crisis. Armenia has been no exception, requiring urgent actions from Government and international community to cope with the unfolding crisis beyond the health sector, to mitigate devastating impact of the pandemic on the economy.

Last but not least, conflicts and use of force exacerbate the pandemic and the humanitarian impact of pandemic indeed is most severe in conflict zones. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that international community take urgent steps to facilitate unhindered humanitarian access to the people residing in conflict zones.

We look forward to interesting and fruitful discussions.

Thank you.