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

Statement
in response to the Reports by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group
and the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office
delivered by Ambassador Ashot Hovakimian
at the 738th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
November 6, 2008

Mr. Chairman,

We warmly welcome Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group and Personal Representative of the Chairman in Office Ambassador Kasprzyk back to the Permanent Council.

We would like to stress from the outset, that since both the Presidents and the Foreign Ministers have been involved in this process, and it is our conviction that the Co-Chairs are trying to fairly represent the state of the game, we are not here to second-guess them. Our Delegation will not address any substantive issue that may be at the basis of the discussions.

Let us thank esteemed Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group and Personal Representative of Chairman in Office for their reports, which as usual have been prepared carefully, avoiding false expectations and at the same time deftly indicating those avenues that parties involved in this process choose to follow.

We also would like to take this opportunity to praise once again the initiative of the President of Russian Federation Mr. Medvedev hosting two Presidents' talks in Moscow, as a result of which a declaration was signed by the Presidents of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia.

We recognize that the meeting in Moscow between Presidents and Foreign Ministers with the participation of Minsk Group Co-Chairs has been useful, constructive and parties involved in these talks have had an opportunity to exchange their views and approaches. The important outcome of the meeting, as it has been also mentioned by the Co-Chairs today, is the joint declaration signed by the three Presidents, where among other important issues, the key role and valuable engagement of the Minsk Group has been underlined as only internationally recognized format to facilitate peace talks between the parties.

The mediation efforts of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group are very much valued and appreciated by Armenia. As a unique structure, mandated by this organization and thanks to dedication and professionalism of the Co-Chairmen of Minsk Group, this structure during of its almost 14 years long engagement scrupulously and in depth

has been analyzing the root causes, conflicting approaches, sources of mistrust and current gaps of views. Of course, we have had moments of growing expectations, anticipating that solution of this conflict is right behind the corner. We have that kind of opportunities twice or more, but unfortunately, those opportunities have been left behind for occasional quotation during this kind of meetings. And we very much want to believe that we will not refer to today's opportunity in a way that we just did to others.

In our view, another remarkable aspect of the document is that parties agreed to continue constructive dialogue towards political resolution of the conflict and underlined the importance of creating conditions for implementation of confidence building measures. Our delegation has been continuously advocating that one needs confidence building measures before peace, because if there is peace, confidence should follow from it anyway or lead to confidence maintenance. In our opinion, confidence building is, whatever modest steps it may entail, a useful contribution for the agreement.

Armenia's perception of the current situation or this phase of interaction gives another hope that parties have mutually agreed upon and committed themselves to political solution and peace talks, based on principles and norms of international law underlining that there are no other alternatives.

We would also like to inform that during his recent visit to Paris, the President of Armenia, Mr. Sargsian, has also shared Armenia's approaches and visions with his French colleague, President Sarkozy, giving him first hand information about the latest developments and current state of affairs on negotiation process over the Nagorno Karabakh.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me assure you that Armenia, as it was before, will continue to put its efforts to find a mutually beneficial and acceptable solution to this conflict. Thus, being constructive and result oriented in its approaches.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.